

Dating the Birth of Israel: ca. 1500 or 1200 BCE ?

Abstract: The land of Israel appeared after the conquest of Canaan and according to the Bible, which states that 480 years elapsed between the Exodus and Solomon's 4th year (1Kings 6:1) when he began to build the temple (around 1000 BCE), this conquest had to occur around 1500 BCE. As the very name "Israel" appears for the first time in the Israel Stele (dated ca. 1200 BCE), archaeologists claim that from 1500 to 1200 BCE, called the "period of the Judges", Canaan was in fact a set of small Canaanite kingdoms vassals of Egypt and, consequently, Israel did not exist at that time! So there is a major contradiction between the biblical account, which would be a myth according to archaeologists, and historical interpretation derived from few archaeological remains.

A chronological examination of that period will show that many archaeological interpretations are baseless and are just a modern version of story-telling for adults. Five datable synchronisms between Egypt and Canaan over 1500-1200 BCE will be examined: 1) sudden collapse of the Hyksos Dynasties when Pharaoh Segenre Taa died in c. 1533 BCE after his last meeting with Moses, 2) Jericho and Hazor are burnt by Joshua in c. 1493 BCE then sudden emergence of Shasu "Bedouins" in Canaan, 3) King of Hazor Jabin II and the ruler Sisera died in c. 1347 BCE when the 'Apiru's war occurred ('Apiru means "factions"), 4) War of Seti I against Amurru (defeated by Gideon) in c. 1294 BCE, 5) Askelon is taken and "Israel is laid waste" according to the Merenptah stele dated c. 1211 BCE (after Judge Jair's death).

Until early 20th century history was written from historical documents sometimes reinforced by archaeological discoveries but, mainly from World War II, archaeologists began to (re)write history. Classic history has been replaced by "scientific" history on the grounds that ancient historians had transmitted in part some myths, consequently historical truth is now validated only if there are archaeological evidences, thus a lack of evidence is supposed to be an evidence of lack. The famous archaeologist Finkelstein explains very well how rewriting history in his book: *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts*. In fact, a new vision very similar to gnosticism.

One must be aware that some scholarly attacks to discredit the authenticity of the Old Testament, made by some academics (for most Egyptologists) as a means to eradicate religious obscurantism, are in fact the result of an ideological propaganda initiated by the Nazi Party in 1933 to impose a vision of a world governed solely by eugenics (the Brave New World). Despite the aversion of the Nazis against culture, German scholars (nation with most Nobel prizes at that time) have been able opportunely to provide their service to Nazi authorities showing them clear links between the ideology of Plato's Republic and Hitler's Mein Kampf¹. Two academic areas have been particularly active in supporting the Nazi propaganda: Doctors, in order to teach the theory of evolution and its practical applications² such as eugenics, and Archaeologists, in order to teach a new Indo-Aryan prehistory. In 1931, there was only 1 rescue archaeological unit in Germany upgraded to 9 in 1939 and then to a staggering 14 in 1943, at the height of the war. The archaeological profession was particularly prone to political engagement, and no less than 86% of all registered archaeologists adhered to the Nazi party³ (the number of archaeologists has been multiplied by 6 during this period)⁴. This figure is impressive when we consider that fewer

¹ J. CHAPOUTOT –Le national-socialisme et l'Antiquité
Paris 2008 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 53,92,179,244-249.

² Thus 69% of German doctors were members of, at least, one of the Nazi organizations (Nazi Party, League of Nazi doctors, SA or SS) and the number of doctors increased by 35% between 1939 and 1944 (L. HASAPIS –Les expériences de la mort. L'expérimentation humaine menée par les allemands et les japonais entre 1931 et 1945. Lyon 2010 Éd. Université Claude Bernard pp. 19-20).

³ J.-P. LEGENDRE, L. OLIVIER, & B. SCHNITZLER –L'Archéologie Nazie en Europe de l'Ouest
in: *Public Archaeology*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Summer 2008) pp. 135-138.

⁴ *Archéologia* n°442 mars 2007 pp. 42-57.

than 10% of the population held a Nazi membership card. As explained Doctor Joseph Goebbels in his diary (he earned a PhD from Heidelberg University in 1921), the purpose of all this academic teaching was to eradicate the 'Judeo-Christian gangrene' from European people⁵. As no Nazi archaeologist were worried at Nuremberg Trial, they were able to form a new generation of archaeologists according to their former (Aryan) ideology. These postwar archaeologists (most Egyptologists) began publishing articles, mainly from 1980⁶, to prove that the text of the Old Testament should be considered without historical value. It is to be noted that more these academics are close to political power more their attacks against the Bible are virulent and ideological.

How to write an accurate, reliable, exact and consequently trustworthy history? This complex issue has been resolved by Herodotus, the "Father of History", 25 centuries ago. Since Herodotus, genuine historians write history by carrying out a scientific investigation based on the following process: collecting a maximum documents (accessed by the means of critical editions) and crosschecking these testimonies, then determining the "when" (through chronology), the "where" (through geography) and the "who" (through genealogy). From these data, it is then possible to guess (more or less) the "how" and the "why". Progressively archaeologists are replacing to historians and thus are changing history into a scholarly propaganda. How did they succeed such a feat? Archaeologists generally rewrite history by destroying its two foundations: the testimonies and chronology. Historical testimonies are rejected under the pretext that they contain some errors and the old historical chronology is replaced by archaeological dating. This approach seems scientific but it is a scientific fraud because the historical records are in fact replaced by scientific conjectures based on imagination and the archaeological dating relied on ceramics and carbon-14 are difficult to interpret and largely conjectural. For example, archaeological dating which comes from ceramics is in fact calibrated on the "classical chronology", the style of ceramics sometimes spread over a century or more, lastly it is assumed in a simplistically way that all potteries in a stratum are all contemporary (this assumption is however, impossible to prove and often far from true). The conquest of Canaan by the Israelites is the perfect example of this rewriting of history.

A lot of reliable historical testimonies that the Asiatic population who carried the Hyksos rule in Egypt was expelled to the Palestine (which agree with Egyptian evidence), come from: 1) Hecataeus of Abdera, a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher (\approx 300 BCE), 2) Manetho, an Egyptian priest (\approx 280 BCE), 3) Demetrius the Chronograph, a Jewish historian (\approx 220 BCE), 4) Artapanus, a Hellenistic Jewish historian (\approx 200 BCE), 5) Eupolemus Hellenistic Jewish historian (\approx 160 BCE), 6) Lysimachus of Alexandria, an Egyptian grammarian (\approx 100 BCE), 7) Diodorus of Sicily, a Greek historian (\approx 50 BCE), 8) Strabo, a Greek geographer, philosopher and historian (\approx 20 CE), 9) Chaeremon of Alexandria, a Stoic philosopher, historian, and grammarian. He was superintendent of the portion of the Alexandrian library that was kept in the Temple of Serapis, and as custodian and expounder of the sacred books he belonged to the higher ranks of the Egyptian priesthood (\approx 50 CE). 10) Tacitus, a senator and a historian of the Roman Empire (\approx 100 CE), 11) Tatian an Assyrian early Christian writer (\approx 160-170 CE), 12) Eusebius, a Roman historian, exegete and Christian polemicist (\approx 300 CE), 13) Moses of Khoren, a prominent Armenian historian (370-486 CE). According to Manetho, for example: *He (Salitis) rebuilt Avaris, and made very strong by the walls he built about it, and by a most numerous garrison of 240,000 armed men whom he put into it to keep it. Thither Salatis came in summer time, partly to gather his corn,*

⁵ J. GOEBBELS –Journal 1933-1939
Paris 2007 Éd. Tallandier pp. 22,394,665,684.

⁶ J.K. HOFFMEIER – Israel in Egypt. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition
New York 1996 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 3-5.

and pay his soldiers their wages, and partly to exercise his armed men, and thereby to terrify foreigners (...) [Ahmose] the son of [Sequenre] made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with 480,000 men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, wherever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than 240,000 [soldiers], and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia, they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this great number of men, and called it Jerusalem (Against Apion I:78, 88-90). According to the Jewish Torah and the Samaritan Pentateuch: Yehowah spoke to Moses, in the desert of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year after the exodus from Egypt, and said: Take a census of the whole community of Israelites by clans and families, taking a count of the names of all the males, head by head. All the Israelites of 20 years and over, fit to bear arms, were counted by families. Altogether, the total came to 603,550 (Numbers 1:1-2, 45-46). In addition, the Christian New Testament confirms these Jewish and Samaritan accounts. How archaeologists have they managed in discrediting these historical narratives?

Israel Finkelstein, Israeli archaeologist, Director of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, claims that: *Modern archeology has shown that the concept of archives kept in Jerusalem with writings of the tenth century, is an absurdity based on a biblical witness and not on factual evidence. Bible stories would rank therefore among national mythologies, and would have no more historical foundation than Homeric saga of Ulysses, or that of Aeneas, founder of Rome, sung by Virgil*⁷. In the preface of the book *The Forgotten Biblical Kingdom* written by Finkelstein⁸, Thomas Römer, professor at the prestigious Collège de France (Chair of biblical backgrounds), explains why: *It is not easy to reconstruct a history of Israel and Judah from the biblical accounts, which have not been preserved in historical perspective but above all for (multiple) theological reasons (...) Today, there is no longer any doubt that the stories of the Patriarchs, the Exodus from Egypt and the conquest of the land [of Canaan] do not reflect successive and datable periods. This is rather legends or myths of origin, which afterwards were arranged according to a chronological order. This, Israel Finkelstein showed in a book in French: The Bible Unearthed, that made him known widely to French public. In this book, Professor Finkelstein, in collaboration with Neil Ascher Silberman, showed that the results of archeology oblige us to put the biblical presentation of the conquest in question, the formation of Israel is not the result of a Blitzkrieg of a few weeks but of a long process (...) This new vision of history is based on a redefinition of archaeological epochs and dating of strata (the famous "low chronology"), which can rely on solid arguments, not to say almost irrefutable. Finkelstein places the emergence of Israel in the process of the collapse of the city-states and the emergence of small towns. Finkelstein and Silberman argue⁹ that instead of the Israelites conquering Canaan after the Exodus, as suggested by the book of Joshua, most of them had in fact always been there; the Israelites were simply Canaanites who developed into a distinct culture. Recent surveys of long-term settlement patterns in the Israelite heartlands show no sign of violent invasion or even peaceful infiltration, but rather a sudden demographic transformation about 1200 BCE (when the Sea Peoples destroyed many cities around the Mediterranean) in which villages appear in the previously unpopulated highlands. We don't have to be daunted by these prestigious scholars because their "new vision of history" without any reliable chronology is unscientific.*

⁷ I. FINKELSTEIN – Le grand roi? Rien qu'un potentat local in: *Historia* n°698 (février 2005) p. 73.

I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN - La Bible dévoilée Paris 2002 Éd. Bayard pp. 51-53.

⁸ I. FINKELSTEIN - La royauté biblique oubliée Paris 2013 Éd. Odile Jacob pp. 7-12.

⁹ I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN - The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts New York, 2001, Ed. Free Press, pp. 107-118.

THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL "NEW (DECEITFUL) VISION" UNEARTHED

In his book *The Bible Unearthed*, Finkelstein explains why the narrative about the conquest of Canaan is a myth, however most of his arguments are wrong (highlighted in red) or worthless (in orange): *So, independent archaeological and historical sources tell of migrations of Semites from Canaan to Egypt, and of Egyptians forcibly expelling them. This basic outline of immigration and violent return to Canaan is parallel to the biblical account of Exodus. Two key questions remain: First, who were these Semitic immigrants? And second, how does the date of their sojourn in Egypt square with biblical chronology? [There is] a conflict of dates and kings. The expulsion of the Hyksos is generally dated, on the basis of Egyptian records and the archaeological evidence of destroyed cities in Canaan, to around 1570 BCE. As we mentioned in the last chapter in discussing the dating of the age of the patriarchs, 1 Kings 6:1 tells us that the start of the construction of the Temple in the fourth year of Solomon's reign took place 480 years after the Exodus. According to a correlation of the regnal dates of Israelite kings with outside Egyptian and Assyrian sources, this would roughly place the Exodus in 1440 BCE. That is more than a hundred years after the date of the Egyptian expulsion of the Hyksos, around 1570 BCE. But there is an even more serious complication. The Bible speaks explicitly about the forced labor projects of the children of Israel and mentions, in particular, the construction of the city of Raamses (Exodus 1:11). In the fifteenth century BCE such a name is inconceivable. The first pharaoh named Ramesses came to the throne only in 1320 BCE —more than a century after the traditional biblical date. As a result, many scholars have tended to dismiss the literal value of the biblical dating, suggesting that the figure 480 was little more than a symbolic length of time, representing the life spans of twelve generations, each lasting the traditional forty years. This highly schematized chronology puts the building of the Temple about halfway between the end of the first exile (in Egypt) and the end of the second exile (in Babylon). However, most scholars saw the specific biblical reference to the name Ramesses as a detail that preserved an authentic historical memory. In other words, they argued that the Exodus must have occurred in the thirteenth century BCE. And there were other specific details of the biblical Exodus story that pointed to the same era. First, Egyptian sources report that the city of Pi-Ramesses ("The House of Ramesses") was built in the delta in the days of the great Egyptian king Ramesses II, who ruled 1279-1213 BCE, and that Semites were apparently employed in its construction. Second, and perhaps most important, the earliest mention of Israel in an extrabiblical text was found in Egypt in the stele describing the campaign of Pharaoh Merneptah —the son of Ramesses II— in Canaan at the very end of the thirteenth century BCE. The inscription tells of a destructive Egyptian campaign into Canaan, in the course of which a people named Israel were decimated to the extent that the pharaoh boasted that Israel's "seed is not!" The boast was clearly an empty one, but it did indicate that some group known as Israel was already in Canaan by that time. In fact, dozens of settlements that were linked with the early Israelites appeared in the hill country of Canaan around that time. So if a historical Exodus took place, scholars have argued, it must have occurred in the late thirteenth century BCE. The Merneptah stele contains the first appearance of the name Israel in any surviving ancient text. This again raises the basic questions: Who were the Semites in Egypt? Can they be regarded as Israelite in any meaningful sense? No mention of the name Israel has been found in any of the inscriptions or documents connected with the Hyksos period. Nor is it mentioned in later Egyptian inscriptions, or in an extensive fourteenth century BCE cuneiform archive found at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt, whose nearly four hundred letters describe in detail the social, political, and demographic conditions in Canaan at that time. As we will argue in a later chapter, the Israelites emerged only gradually as a distinct group in Canaan, beginning at the end of the thirteenth century BCE. There is no recognizable archaeological evidence of Israelite presence in Egypt immediately before that time¹⁰. We will see that many arguments are wrong or worthless. It is unfortunate that most scholars accept such information without making a number of checks.*

¹⁰ I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN -*The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Its Sacred Texts* New York, 2002, Ed. Simon and Schuster, pp. 56-57.

- *The expulsion of the Hyksos is generally dated (...) to around 1570 BCE.* Egyptologists consider that the Hyksos war began at the end of the reign of Seqenenre and their expulsion took place during the reign of Ahmose, probably between the 10th and the 20th of his reign generally dated to around 1540-1530 BCE¹¹ (never 1570 BCE):

Dodson	1549-1524	Kitchen	1550-1525	Shaw	1550-1525
Grimal	1552-1526	Krauss	1539-1515	Vandersleyen	1543-1518
Helck	1530-1504	Malek	1540-1525	von Beckerath	1550-1525
Hornung	1552-1527	Redford	1569-1545	(Gertoux)	1530-1505

- *this would roughly place the Exodus in 1440 BCE.* As Finkelstein noticed, many scholars have tended to dismiss the literal value of the biblical dating. Effectively most Catholic scholars do not trust in biblical dating and don't make any chronological calculations¹², however if one is trying he will see that the departure from Egypt took place in 1533 BCE and that the coming into the promised land with the conquest of Canaan took place 40 years later (when the Exodus ended) in 1493 BCE (see Dating the Biblical Chronology). It is noteworthy that the date 1533 BCE corresponds exactly to the one coming from Egyptian chronology (see Dating the War of the Hyksos).
- *the city of Raamses (Exodus 1:11). In the fifteenth century BCE such a name is inconceivable (...) most scholars saw the specific biblical reference to the name Ramesses as a detail that preserved an authentic historical memory. In other words, they argued that the Exodus must have occurred in the thirteenth century BCE.* Most biblical scholars consider this argument as essential¹³ whereas it yet is unfounded: *Biblical Raames and the capital Pr R'-ms-sw [Per-Ramses], apart from the personal name, seem to have nothing in common. In the complete lack of corroborative evidence it is absolutely essential to exercise caution in equating the two*¹⁴. In the Bible, Ramses is not the name of a pharaoh but the name of a city built as storage place for Pharaoh (Exodus 1:11) and a former name of the land of Goshen at the time of Joseph (Genesis 47:1-11) dated around 1730 BCE. Pharaoh at Moses time was staying near Ramses (Exodus 12:31-37) which was Fostat, near Memphis, according to Flavius Josephus (Jewish Antiquities II:315). From the very first Egyptian dynasties, the birth name of pharaohs is preceded by the title *sa-râ* (*s3 r'*) "son of the sun god" and systematically from the 12th Dynasty¹⁵. The Egyptian name Ramses (*r' ms3*) means "the sun god has spawned him", like Ahmose (*I'h ms*) "the Moon god has spawned him", Musa (*nm s3*) "Water (god Nile)'s son", etc., because all the names linked to pharaohs are governed by the honorific anteposition¹⁶. Thus, the title Rameses was simply used by foreigners to designate any pharaoh at that time when the capital of Egypt was in the Delta (North of Egypt).
- *Second, and perhaps most important, the earliest mention of Israel in an extrabiblical text was found in Egypt in the stele describing the campaign of Pharaoh Merneptah —the son of Ramesses II— in Canaan at the very end of the thirteenth century BCE (...) No mention of the name Israel has been found in any of the inscriptions or documents connected with the Hyksos period. Nor is it mentioned in later Egyptian inscriptions, or in an extensive fourteenth century BCE cuneiform archive found at Tell el-Amarna in Egypt, whose nearly four hundred letters describe in detail the social, political, and demographic conditions in Canaan at that time.* This argument, often used by archaeologists is

¹¹ M. DESSOUDEIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud p. 253.

¹² R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 365-368.

¹³ J.K. HOFFMEIER – Israel in Egypt. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition
Oxford 1996 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 122-126.

¹⁴ D. REDFORD - Vestus Testamentum
Leyde 1963 p. 410.

¹⁵ Y. BONNAMY, A. SADEK – Dictionnaire des hiéroglyphes
Paris 2010 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 782-792.

¹⁶ For example, the phrase "like Ra" is written *r'-mi* "Ra like", the word "king" pronounced *n(y)-sut* is written *sut-n(y)*.

irrelevant as can be checked out with few examples. Thus, there is no mention of the name "Egypt" in the Old Testament! It is not a joke since this name was *Kemi*[t] "Black Land" in Egyptian, preserved in Arabic as *alchemy* "The Kemi" whereas in Hebrew the name of Egypt is *Misrayim* close to the Assyrian *Misri*[m] "pair of borders". Obviously, we must accept as equivalent the names: *Kemi* (Egyptian), *Misrayim* (Hebrew) and *Aiguptos* (Greek). Moreover, not only the name of countries is different depending on the language but it has also changed over time. For example, the city of Byblos (Greek name) was called Keben in Egyptian and Gubla in Old Babylonian, at the time of Abraham (c. 2000 BCE), then Kepeni and Gubal (or Gebal?), at the time of Moses and Jbeil today. If the Egyptians did not know the Jews and Israel mentioned in the Bible, it is simply that they did not use the Hebrew language (nor English, obviously).

- *the Israelites emerged only gradually as a distinct group in Canaan, beginning at the end of the thirteenth century BCE. There is no recognizable archaeological evidence of Israelite presence in Egypt immediately before that time.* This lie is repeated ad nauseum by archaeologists. In fact, the Egyptians knew the Hyksos very well, unlike Egyptologists, since three of their dynasties (XIV, XV, XVI) ruled Egypt approximately from 1750 to 1530 BCE. The Hyksos disappeared abruptly after the death of Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa. One can notice that Egyptian documents unanimously describe the departure of the Hyksos from Egypt to Palestine in a disaster. Modern Egyptologists pictured a 'war of the Hyksos', however no document speaks of war but only that Avaris, Hyksos' capital, was looted and vandalized after their departure (see Dating the War of the Hyksos). According to most Egyptologists: *the original identity and language of the Hyksos, related to Hurrians, remain relatively undefined*¹⁷ but according to Egyptian records, the Hyksos came from Retenu (Syria-Palestine), called Canaan in Akkadian, and spoke a language related to Old Canaanite (according to their proper names). When Idrimi (1500-1470) fled to the south of Syria, he met the Sutu [Suteans], and then lived 7 years with the Hapiru [Hebrews] in the country of Canaan (*ki-in-a-nim*^{ki})¹⁸. Because of migrations, the name Canaan has designated different areas: Lebanon at the time of Ebla¹⁹ (c. -2300, written *Ga-na-na-im*), Upper Mesopotamia at the time of Mari²⁰ (c. -1800, written *Ki-na-ab-nu*), Syria-Palestine at the time of Idrimi (c. -1500), and Philistia at the time of Merenptah (c. -1200). Consequently the land of Israel was called Canaan in Babylonian language and Retenu in Egyptian language. The inhabitants of Retenu (Syria-Palestine) were called *aamu* (*ʿmm*) which is generally translated as "Asiatics", but "Orientals", or better "Canaan's people", would be more correct. When the Hyksos disappear from Egypt, around 1500 BCE, a new population appears suddenly in Canaan called Shasu (*ššm*) by the Egyptians. Once again, archaeologists make no connection between these semi-nomadic Bedouins called Shasu "those wandering" residing in Syria-Palestine and the Hebrews of the Bible.

As can be seen, archaeologists systematically isolate all evidence, which prevents an overview, they accept the identifying of peoples and countries only if they have the same name in all languages, and they consistently refuse to reconcile archaeological data with those from the Bible. Before performing a chronological reconstruction, it is therefore necessary to collect all these data:

¹⁷ J. LECLANT – Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité

Paris 2005 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 1105-1106, 2015-2016.

¹⁸ P. GARELLI, J.M. DURAND, H. GONNET, C. BRENIQUET - Le Proche-Orient Asiatique Paris 1997 Éd. P.U.F. pp. 139-140.

¹⁹ J.N. TUBB – Peoples of the Past. Canaanites London 1998 Ed. British Museum p. 15.

A. ARCHI – The Head of Kura-The Head of 'Adabal in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 64:2 (2005) pp. 81-100.

²⁰ G. DOSSIN – Une mention des Cananéens dans une lettre de Mari in: *Syria* n°50 1973, pp. 277-282.

THE HYKSOS: WHERE DID THEY COME FROM AND WHERE DID THEY GO ?

Little is known about the end of Hyksos rule in Egypt, particularly at Avaris. In his tomb at Elkab, Ahmose son of Ibana mentions only that "one captured Avaris". Flavius Josephus who quoted the books of Manetho, an Egyptian priest, wrote that forcing a surrender of Avaris by blockading did not work, and that the Egyptians gave up in despair. They would have concluded a treaty by which all the "shepherds" were to leave Egypt, taking their possessions and households on a desert trip to Syria. Following Josephus, historians have not only concluded that the Hyksos were driven out and moved to Palestine, but also that that they had come from there. Egyptologists have seldom appreciated the impact that the Hyksos rule must have made on Egypt. They have largely taken over the ancient Egyptian doctrine that it had been an unpleasant interlude and produced no more than a Theban counter-reaction that brought on the New Kingdom. However, it is only realistic to assume that the presence of a considerable number of Western Asiatic people in north-eastern Egypt c. 1820-1530 BC helped to shape the succeeding New Kingdom culture. Could this population have disappeared, and could it be that 300 years of cultural interaction in the Delta were brought to a halt the moment that Avaris was taken and the Hyksos kingdom destroyed? This scenario is highly unlikely.

According to archaeological sources, Avaris was abandoned, and archaeological evidence has shown no signs of destruction besides the looting of tombs. This would be entirely in keeping with Josephus story. In several areas, however, settler activity continued into the 18th Dynasty. However, according to M. Bietak²¹: *Summing up, we have no evidence that the Western Asiatic population who carried the Hyksos rule in Egypt was expelled to the Levant, except for the Manethonian/Josephus tradition. While one cannot rule out that elite groups moved to southern Canaan at the end of the Hyksos Period, especially to Sharuben, there is mounting evidence to suggest that a large part of this population stayed in Egypt and served their new overlords in various capacities. These people contributed in many ways to New Kingdom culture and society and seem to have built a lasting local tradition in the eastern Delta, kept alive by the cultic installations of Canaanite gods, particularly Seth of Avaris, down to Ramesside times.* However, the conclusion of Bietak: *there is mounting evidence to suggest that a large part of this population stayed in Egypt and served their new overlords in various capacities*, is wrong because of the following reasons:

- The port of Avaris contained 300 ships (Kamose's stele), that proves that this city would contain tens of thousands of people, has been completely removed. If this crowd of Asiatics remained in Egypt (after the sack) they would have constituted a serious threat of revolt for Kamose. Moreover, how to explain that Kamose succeeded relatively easily crushing the Asiatics (near Nefrusy) who were associated with the revolt of Teti, the mighty Viceroy of Kush, and he did not have been able to face the Asiatics in Avaris.
- From Ahmose there is a complete disappearance of any reference to the Hyksos and Palestine "Lower Retenu" became suddenly the "land of Kharru"²² (Hurrians) for Egyptians. Shortly after, from Thutmose I and up to Ramses III, appear in Palestine an important new Asiatic people, called Shasu, who are extensively described in the Egyptian iconographic documents²³.

Strictly speaking, the Hyksos (*ḥqꜣw ḥꜣswt*) "rulers of foreign lands" must be understood as a foreign dynasty that rules Egypt c. 1640-1530 BCE. Where they came

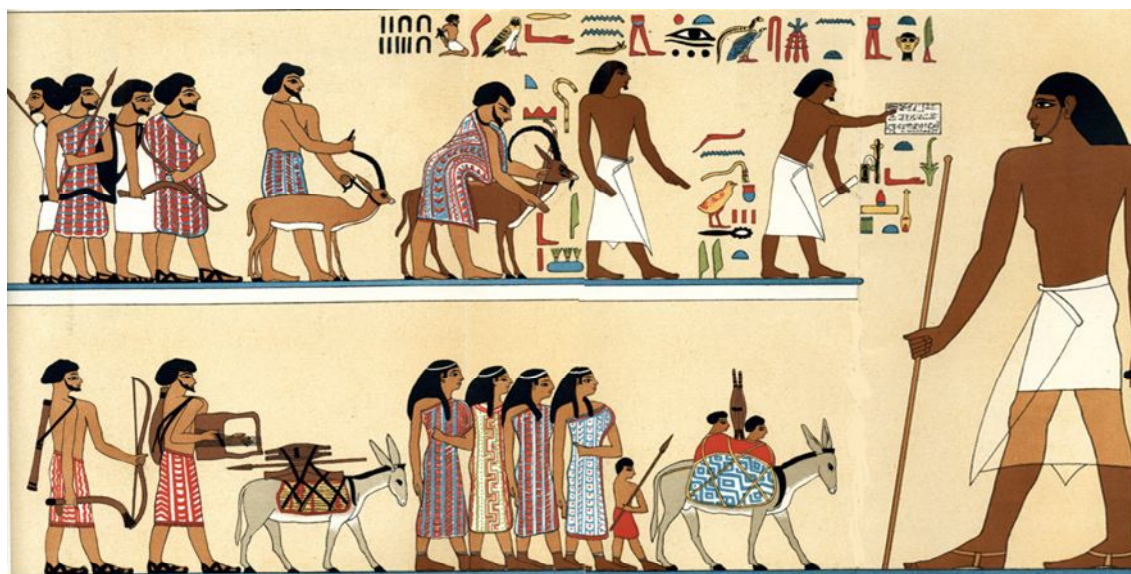
²¹ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go?
in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 164-171.

²² J.-C. GOYON – De l'Afrique à l'Orient
Paris 2005 Ed. E.J. ellipses pp. 57-61.

²³ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 248-250.

from, how they came to power and how they manage to assert themselves in Egypt are still matters of ongoing debate²⁴. Flavius Josephus used the designation “Hyksos” incorrectly as a kind of ethnic term for people of foreign origin who seized power in Egypt for a certain period. In this sense, for sake of convenience, it is also used in this article. One should never forget, however, that, strictly spoken, the term “Hyksos” (𓆎𓅓 *heqa’ ha’s*) were only used by Egyptians to indicate a “ruler of foreign lands” resident in Egypt but native from Retenu (Syro-Palestine). The title *heqa’ aa* “Great ruler” was also used to designate some Pharaohs (as Seqenenre Taa).

An illustration often cited as a classic example of Egyptian-Asiatic contact in the early Middle Kingdom is the painting in Tomb No. 3 at Beni Hasan²⁵. The Tomb belongs to the nomarch Khnumhotep III, who is also an “Overseer of the Eastern Hill Countries”. Besides illustrating the presentation of various types of “cattle” to the nomarch, the painting depicts the arrival of a group of 37 Asiatics who are being led by an Egyptian with the title “Overseer of hunters”. The Asiatics are bearded, and wear the traditional dress of Semites as depicted in Egyptian artwork; they carry weapons typical of Middle Bronze Age Canaan, including what appear to be composite bows and a “duckbilled” axe. One of the inscriptions that accompanies the painting describes the arrival of the “Asiatics”, led by Absha (*Ibš3*), a “ruler of a foreign land (*hq3 h3st*)”, who are bringing black eye-paint to the nomarch Khnumhotep in the 6th year of Senwosret II's reign (1863-1855). Absha, Hyksos' name, is Semite and means maybe "Father of prince" (Abshar)²⁶.



As Galena, the material from which the black eye-paint is ground, is commonly found along the Red Sea coast and near Aswan, these Asiatics have to be Bedouins from Šu[t]u, a region South of the Dead Sea (Moab)²⁷, written Šutum (*Šwtm*) in the Execration texts²⁸ (c. 1950 BCE). As this means nothing in Egyptian it could correspond to the Old Babylonian word *Sūtum* (the famous city of Sodom) which means "tenant farming". It is possible that the Beni Hasan tomb painting may represent an example of official contact

²⁴ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go?
in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 139-181.

²⁵ S.L. COHEN - Canaanites, Chronologies, and Connections
Indiana 2002, Ed. Eisenbrauns pp. 33-50.

²⁶ The sound r is often rendered by an Egyptian 3 at this time, but the reading Abshay "Father of gift" (2Sam 10:10) is also possible.

²⁷ In Numbers 24:17 (LXX) the chiefs of Moab are compared to Seth's sons but it is likely a wordplay (buttock's sons) because Moab's father was Lot and the word *seth* (שֵׁט) means "buttock" in Hebrew (Isaiah 20:4) or "setting" (Genesis 4:25).

²⁸ R. DUSSEAUD – Nouveaux textes égyptiens d'exécution contre les peuples syriens
in: *Syria* 21:2 (Persee, 1940) pp. 170-182.

between Egypt and the inhabitants of Canaan (Moabite), and one which points to a relatively peaceful style of interaction, the same depicted in the Tale of Sinuhe.

Some of the earliest evidence relating to Egyptian contact with the southern Levant during the Middle Bronze Age comes from the very beginning of the Middle Kingdom itself, during the reign of Mentuhotep II (2045-1994). A fragmentary stele found in a secondary context in 18th dynasty palace at El-Deir represents one of Mentuhotep's monument that might describe an historical occurrence rather than simply presenting a standardized and traditional bellicose attitude toward Asiatics and other foreigners. The stele recounts a military expedition and mentions (line x + 8): the hinterland, the Qedem lands and possibly an additional statement about easterners. As Qedem is the same Semitic term meaning "the East" used by Sinuhe to describe the region in which he spent most of his exile after he reached Byblos, this may indicate that part of this particular campaign or military conflict occurred somewhere in the Levant (probably Liban).

The extent of contact with Canaan, and Egyptian views of Asiatics, do not appear to change in any significant way during the reign of Amenemhet I (1975-1946). Although the evidence is slight, "The Prophecy of Neferti", a text associated with Amenemhet I makes mention of Asiatics: *He (Neferti) was concerned for what would happen in the land. He thinks about the condition of the east. Asiatics (ʿ3mw) travel with their swords, terrorizing those who are harvesting, seizing the oxen from the plow (...) All happiness has gone away, the land is cast down in trouble because of those feeders, Asiatics (Styw) who are throughout the land. Enemies have arisen in the east, Asiatics (ʿ3mw) have come down to Egypt. A fortress is deprived of another beside it, the guards do not pay attention of it (...) Asiatics (ʿ3mw) will fall to his sword, Libyans will fall to this flame, rebels to his wrath, traitors to his might, as the serpent on his brow subdues the rebels to him. One will build the "Wall of the Ruler", life prosperity and health, to prevent Asiatics (ʿ3mw) from going down into Egypt²⁹.* The term "Asiatics (*aamu*)" was used by Egyptians to describe the foreigners living in Canaan (probably in the vicinity of the city of Byblos at that time) as indicated by reports of Prince Pepinakht³⁰, living at the time of Pepi II (2179-2121).

The Egyptian words *Aamu* (ʿ3mw) and *Retenu* (Rtmm) are usually translated as "Asiatics" and "Syria-Palestine", they fit well to the biblical terms "people of Canaan" and "Canaan". As the Execration Texts transcribe the names Ascalon and Jerusalem by *ʾIsq3mw* (Ašqalun) and *3w33mm* ([U]rusalimum), the Egyptian letter 3 being used for sound r/l (up to -1800), the word ʿ3mw, could be read Aramu "those of Aram". The region of Aram is very ancient, it appears as A-ra-me^{ki} in inscriptions of Naram-Sin (2163-2126), but its location seems to have changed over time, from an area of Akkad to Syria³¹. "Aramean ancestor" is rendered "Syrian" in the Septuagint (Deuteronomy 26:5). The Egyptian word *Setiu* (Stym) is also translated as "Asiatics" but refers more specifically to Suteans [of Moab].

Egypt's Asiatic policy appears to have changed during the reign of Amenemhet I's successor. 'The Tale of Sinuhe', a fictional account composed during the reign of Senwosret I (1946-1901), indicates an increased interest in the southern Levant and its inhabitants. The Egypto-Canaanite relationship portrayed in the story continues to be one of détente and reasonably cordial relations. Several elements in the story relate peaceful encounters between Egyptians and Canaanites. When Sinuhe leaves Egypt and travels out into the desert, he is saved by a group of Bedouins, the chief of whom is described as "a man who had been in Egypt". Furthermore, the Bedouin chief is said to "recognize"

²⁹ J.K. HOFFMEIER – Israel in Egypt. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition New York 1996 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 58-59.

³⁰ A. ROCCATI – La littérature historique sous l'ancien empire égyptien Paris 1982 Éd. Cerf pp. 208-211.

³¹ E. LIPINSKI – The Aramaeans. Their Ancient History, Culture, Religion in: *Analecta* 100, Peeters 2000, pp. 25-40.

Sinuhe; thus, not only had the chief been in Egypt, but he may also have been in the capital, which where Sinuhe, as a courtier, would have resided prior to his flight. This incident may indicate that, despite the bellicose rhetoric about smiting and crushing sand-dwellers and the like, there were comparatively peaceful relations between the Egyptians and their Asiatic neighbours. One reads: *I gave a road to my feet northward and attained the Wall of the Prince, which was made to repel the Asiatics (Styw) and to crush the Sandfarers (...) I set forth to Byblos; I pushed on to Qedem. I spent half a year there; then Amu-son-of-Ensi, prince of Upper Retenu, took me and said to me: Thou farest well with me, for thou hearest the tongue of Egypt. This he said, for that he had become aware of my qualities, he had heard of my wisdom; Egyptian folk, who were there with him, had testified concerning me (...) I spent many years, and my children grew up as mighty men, each one controlling his tribe (...) for this ruler of Retenu (hq3 pn n Rtnw) caused me to pass many years as commander of his host (...) His Majesty sent to me with gifts of the Royal bounty, and gladdened the heart of this his servant, as it had been the ruler of any foreign country (hq3 n h3st) Thou hast traversed the foreign lands and art gone forth from Qedem to Retenu (...) The Asiatics ('3mw) shall not convert thee (...) Let now Thy Majesty cause to be brought Ma[l]ki from Qedem (...) Then His Majesty said to the Royal Consort: "Behold Sinuhe, who is come as an Asiatic ('3m), an offspring of Asiatics(Styw)-folk".*

Considerable details indicating increased Egyptian activity and interest in Canaan can be found in a fragmentary inscription dating to Amenemhet II (1901-1863). From his Annals one reads³²: *Number of prisoners brought from these foreign lands: 1554 Asiatics (['3]m); as slave tribute from Levantine rulers: 1002 Asiatics (['3]m)*. If Egyptian inscriptions mention traditionally 9 hereditary enemies, their representations are limited to Asiatics in the north and Nubians (Cushites) in the south. A gold pectoral from the tomb of Khnumhotep II (opposite figure), for example, describes an elite Hyksos man with thick hair, small beard and two bands crossed over the chest. Khnumhotep II was a nomarch during the reigns of Amenemhet II (1901-1863), Senwosret II (1863-1855) and Senwosret III (1855-1836).



The impression of peaceful relations gains support from the several graffiti that describe the visit of "the brother of the prince of Retenu, Khebde" at the Egyptian mines. A relief scene, dating to Amenemhet III (1836-1791), depicts the arrival of this individual. Khebde comes to the Sinai mines at Serabit el-Khadim riding on a donkey which is led by one man³³, and driven from behind by another. The skin of the men is painted yellow (following the Egyptian convention for Asiatics). They wear short kilts, and, significantly, they are armed, thus reinforcing the impression that the Egyptians have not coerced the Asiatics into participating in the campaigns. Other Sinai inscriptions list Asiatics among the participants of the expedition. For example, an inscription dating to Senwosret III (1855-1836), lists "the Asiatic Rua, possessor of honour", last in a series of officials carved on the apron of a statue assumed to be of the king. Inscriptions, from Amenemhet III (1836-1791) and from Amenemhat IV (1791-1782), mention the participation of 10 and 20 Asiatics ('3mw) from Retenu, respectively.



³² K.A. KITCHEN - On the Reliability of the Old Testament
Cambridge 2003 Ed. W.B. Eerdmans p. 636.

³³ P. TALLET - Sésostris III et la fin de la XII^e dynastie
Paris 2005 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 160-162.

Although the decrease in both quality and quantity of monuments, public buildings, and other forms in Egypt reveals a downward trend, Egypt's power and prestige abroad do not seem to have weakened until well into the 13th dynasty. Although no monuments or inscriptions exist which speak specifically of Egyptian-Canaanite relations, a relief at Byblos shows the local prince doing homage to Neferhotep I (1700-1685?), one of the more powerful and longer-lived kings of the 13th dynasty. Beginning with the Late 12th dynasty³⁴, the rulers of Byblos styled themselves *ḥ3ḥy- n kpnj*, 'Governor of Byblos'. The title *ḥ3ḥy- n GN* is Egyptian and was used to designate the governors of Egyptian domains, mainly of larger cities and nomes within Egypt during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period, but also of the large forts in Nubia. Foreign chieftains, on the other hand, were designated *nr* 'great' and *ḥq3* 'ruler'. The fact that the rulers of Byblos used specific title suggests therefore that they regarded Byblos as an Egyptian domain and saw themselves as its governors on behalf of the Egyptian king. This situation is substantiated by two sources of a different nature, a relief found at Byblos and a cylinder-seal of unknown provenance. The relief depicts the 'Governor of Byblos Yantinu (*in-t-n*) who was begotten by Governor Yakin (*y3-k-n*)' seated upon a throne in front of which is inscribed a cartouche with the prenomen and nomen of Neferhotep I. The cylinder-seal is inscribed for a certain Yakin-ilu in cuneiform on one side and the prenomen of king Sewesekhtawy on the other side. The fact to record the name of the Egyptian king within those specific context strongly suggests that they regarded themselves officially as subordinates of the Egyptian king. It is notable that it was the Egyptian king (13th dynasty) rather than the Canaanites kings (14th dynasty) who were recognized as the superiors at Byblos. However, Yantinu, whose name is evidently hypocoristic, is identical to a certain Yantin-*'Ammu* recorded as 'king of Byblos' (*lugal gu-ub-la^{ki}*) in an administrative document found at Mari. Cartouches were used by at least two of the governors, one of whom also used the royal epithet *mry DN*, 'beloved of DN', and another governor adopted the epithet *ḥq3-ḥq3w*, 'Rulers of rulers'. The use of cartouches reveals in no uncertain manner that while the men in question officially designated themselves as governors, they clearly regarded themselves as the actual rulers of Byblos. This may well explain why Yantin-*'Ammu* was described as King of Byblos at Mari.

A prince of the land Iry³⁵, which was most probably situated near Sidon (where the seal was found), had the throne name of king Amenemhet III translated into West Semitic *Ddq3-R* "justice of Râ (Ṣaduqa-Râ)", bore the epithet "beloved of Baal (the name of the god is written with the logogram of Seth), lord of Iry (*nb i-3-y*)". On stele at Serabit el-Khadim on Sinai, contingents of Near Easterners are listed among the personnel of mining expeditions that took place during the late 12th Dynasty. An Asiatic dignitary called "brother of the ruler of Retenu" participated at least four times. The "ruler of Retenu" most probably had his seat at Avaris or Tanis, and that it may have been from there that the expeditions were organised. In a tomb of Tell el Dab'a (Avaris), attached to a palatial mansion, has been found a scarab (opposite figure) of the late 12th Dynasty whose inscription names a "[ruler of R]etenu Akeb?".

Some scarabs and seals dating to the 13th Dynasty have been excavated from MB IIA tombs and occupation levels at many Canaanites sites, such as Acco, Tell el-'Ajjul, Ashkelon, Jericho, and Megiddo, which may indicate a high level of Egyptian-Canaanite contact and interaction. Evidence also points to increasing numbers of Asiatics within



³⁴ K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c. 1800-1500 B.C. Copenhagen 1997, Ed. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications Vol. 20 pp. 86-89,123.

³⁵ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go? in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 147, 157.

Egypt, a large numbers of whom seem to have been in domestic service (people well open to exploitation, in fact akin to slavery). In Brooklyn papyrus 35.1446³⁶, almost 2/3 of one household's staff (95 names) have Asiatic names, while other documents contain titles such as "officer in charge of Asiatic troops" and "scribe of the Asiatics". This document, dated from year 10 of Amenemhet III (1836-1791) to year 2 of Sobekhotep III (c. 1700 BCE), is a record of the Bureau of labour³⁷. It shows that at this time there were many Asiatics who were working for Egyptian masters. The document further indicates that these Asiatic names were systematically changed into Egyptian names, which is consistent with the Egyptian custom of that time, as stated in the biblical text in the case of Joseph (Genesis 41:45). Most of these names are clearly West Semitic as Aquba, Menahem, Asher, Shiphra (Exode 1:15), Hiabi-ilu, Sakar and [Ab]i-Baal, Baal-tuya³⁸. Several names also contain the form Aper(u) *pr(w)* which could be causing the designation of an ethnic group³⁹ later known as Apiru⁴⁰ in the Amarna letters generally understood as "faction".

From the 12th dynasty these Asiatics (*Aamu*), who accounted for between 1/6 (at Abydos) and 1/3 (at Kahun) of the population of Egypt⁴¹, will be considered Egyptians "of Asiatic origin" (Hyksos). They are conventionally represented as Egyptians (only their Asiatic origin is mentioned in the texts). Many of these Asiatics entered the country as prisoners of war, others were born in Egypt from Asiatic parent. They were employed in households, on agricultural estates and in service of temples. Their presence is evident in lists of household members and working crews on papyri, especially the ones of Kahun. A study of texts on funerary stele and other material of the time, shows that among 2600 people who appear on these objects, 800 were either themselves *Aamu* or had *Aamu* relatives, or stood in some kind of — often job-related — connection with them. On a stele from Abydos, belonging to Amenyseneb, overseer of the monthly priesthood of a temple at Abydos, among 17 men and women whose figures are preserved, 3 are designated as *Aamu*: the brewer Iri, a female miller Senebit, and a man called Sobekiry. About 12% of workers portrayed in the tomb of Pahery, governor of El-Kab (c. 1480 BCE), were Asiatic (through representation of their heads).

To sum it up, the arrival of Asiatics in Egypt, from the 12th dynasty, was the result of continuing immigration from Syria-Palestine, which is consistent with the biblical account (Genesis 41:41-45,50-1; 46:5-7,27). We therefore should not talk of an 'invasion'. It is in such a context that have described the Hyksos dynasties appeared.

The Second Intermediate Period [S.I.P.] encompasses the 13th to the 17th Dynasties but this arrangement is primarily a product of the Manetho tradition. Nowhere does Manetho's work suffer more than in his coverage of the S.I.P., that amorphous historical stretch bridging the gap between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. Not only does his dynastic chronology stray wildly out of bounds for this period, but the three surviving versions of his history — in Josephus, Africanus and Eusebius — radically disagree with each other as to which kings and which political groups ruled which dynasties

³⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 553-554.

³⁷ B. MENU – Le papyrus du Brooklyn Museum n° 35.1446 et l'immigration syro-palestinienne sous le Moyen Empire
in: *Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 5 (2012) pp. 19-30.

³⁸ G. POSENER – Les asiatiques en Égypte sous les XIIIe et XIIIe dynasties
in: *Syria* 34:1-2 (1957) pp. 145-163.

³⁹ The tribe of Ephraim, as the largest group, represented all the Israelites (2Chronicles 25:7, Jeremiah 7:15). It is therefore possible that the Egyptian term Apiru, "those of Aper" in Egyptian, has been used to designate the Ephraimites. The text of Genesis 41:50-52 connects the name Ephraim (duel form) to *hiphrab* "made fruitful" and not to *epher* ('*aphar* means "dust"). The term *prw* ('Apiru) is rendered by *pru* in Ugaritic, *ḥa-pi-rum* or *ḥa-pi-ri* in some Akkadian proper names.

⁴⁰ J.E. HOCH – Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period
Princeton 1994 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 61-65.

⁴¹ D. ARNOLD – Image and Identity: Egypt's Eastern Neighbours, East Delta People and the Hyksos
in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 183-221.

and how long each of the dynasties lasted (Josephus' version could be the more reliable). Manetho originally had a group of 32 Hyksos kings in Xoïs and 6 Hyksos kings who established their capital in the city of Avaris. They reigned 103 years according to Eusebius' version. And 37 Theban kings, perhaps identically, following the arrangement in the Turin Canon of Kings, which had 32 Hyksos kings preceding the 6 six Great Hyksos kings who reigned 108 years and 37 or 38 Theban kings following afterwards⁴².

Despite numerous errors and their incomplete state, the existence of such lists shows that these royal dynasties were considered Egyptian. The ranking of dynasties is in chronological order, each dynasty being linked to a capital. Archaeological remains⁴³ have confirmed the Manetho's report, except for Xoïs (its name *ḫ3swm* is close to the word "foreigners" in Egyptian). The first capital of the Hyksos was Tanis. This is deduced from the presence of sphinxes and royal statues dated the Middle Kingdom (12th and 13th dynasties) found in the sanctuary of Amon, the latest relic of this period being the statue of Sobekhotep IV⁴⁴ (1686-1677). This is consistent with the biblical account which located the settlement of the Hebrews in the land of Goshen, also referred as the "field of Tanis" (Genesis 45:10; 47:11; Psalms 78:12, 43), called "meadow of Djau" in Egyptian⁴⁵. The city of Tanis would have been founded by Amenemhat I⁴⁶. According to the Bible, after arriving in Canaan at 75 years old (in 1963 BCE), Abraham would have changed the name of Kiriath-arba "city of four" into Hebron "joining" (Genesis 23:2) and then, 7 years later, would found the Egyptian city of Tanis (Numbers 13:22). The biblical version might be right, because the name of Tanis, *šo'an* in Hebrew (pronounced Tsoân), means "moving tents", whereas in Egyptian *da'an* (pronounced Djaân) means nothing.

The comparison of archaeological data with the Turin Canon list shows that the Hyksos dynasties should be in parallel⁴⁷:

Period	Length (Turin King-list)	Egyptian Dynasty		Asiatic Dynasty	
				(Capital)	King
1775-1778	213 years	12 th (Lisht/ [Memphis])	Vizier		
1778-1750?	[?]	13 th (Lisht/ [Memphis])	Vizier		
1750?-1680?			Vizier	14 th (Tanis)	Hyksos
1680?-1572?	108 years		-	15 th (Avaris)	Great Hyksos
1572?-1530	[?]	17 th (Thebes)	-	16 th (Edfu?)	Thebans
1530-1295		18 th (Thebes)	Vizier		

During the 17th Dynasty, there was, besides the pharaoh, a Ruler of Kush (*ḫq3 n K3*)⁴⁸ in the south, a vassal king regarded as a viceroy of Egypt, and a Hyksos king in the north (Delta), considered a co-regent because of his royal titulary which appears sometimes on some scarabs or monuments. However, this criterion is not absolute because some powerful nomarchs at Abydos⁴⁹ also adopted this kind of titulary: first name

⁴² G. GREENBERG – Manetho. A Study in Egyptian Chronology
 Pennsylvania 2004 Marco Polo Monographs pp. 103-144.

⁴³ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
 Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 169-177.

⁴⁴ J. LECLANT – Tanis. L'or des pharaons
 Paris 1987. Éd. Ministère des affaires étrangères pp. 183-187.

⁴⁵ D. VALBELLE – Tanis
 in: Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité sous la direction de Jean Leclant 2005 Éd. PUF p. 2123.

⁴⁶ N. GRIMAL - Histoire de l'Égypte ancienne
 Paris 1988 Éd. Fayard p. 212.

⁴⁷ T. SCHNEIDER - Ausländer in Ägypten während des Mittleren Reiches und der Hyksoszeit
 in: *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 42, Wiesbaden 1998 Ed. Harrassowitz Verlag pp. 123-145.

P. VERNUS, J. YOYOTTE - Dictionnaire des pharaons
 Paris 1998 Éd. Noësis pp. 63, 185-186.

⁴⁸ S. KUBISCH – Biographies of the Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties

in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) p. 323.

⁴⁹ For example, these three nomarchs: Wepwawtemsaf, Pentjeny and Senââib.

(enthronement name) then family name (birth name) preceded by the words "son of Râ", both names being written in cartouches. The Hyksos kings were not vassal kings but co-regents because their names on scarabs or monuments are never preceded by the official title: *nsw bity* "king of Upper and Lower Egypt" (except Apopi) and they have no document dated with years of reign (except Apopi, year 33).

The Hyksos kings, such as Egyptian governors, were appointed directly by the Pharaoh. After the restoration of the unity of Egypt by Mentuhotep II at the 11th Dynasty, first kings of the 12th dynasty reorganize a provincial administration similar to the one of the Old Kingdom. Despite the decentralization of the provincial administration, the Residence still occupies a prominent place in the appointment and training of nomarchs who often spend a part of their career in the Residence before being appointed in the provinces⁵⁰. During the Old Kingdom, a time when Abraham is supposed to have lived, kings of Egypt are regularly referred to 'Residence (*hnm*)' and sometimes by the word pharaoh (*per-âa*) meaning "Great domain"⁵¹ (*pr-ʿ3*), because Egyptian government was confused with the place where the king resided. For example, when Sinuhe, an Egyptian official, arrived in Palestine, a ruler of Upper Retenu (*hq3 pw n Rḫmw ḥrt*) who welcomes him asked: *Is it something happened to the Residence?* (The Tale of Sinuhe §§ 54-58). The Hyksos kings acted as a representative of the pharaoh. The Egyptian title "representative (*idmw*)" is misleading because it might serve to designate any high representative, including the Pharaoh himself, as the viceroy of Kush⁵², which put him almost on a par with the pharaoh. Horemheb, for example, first ruled Egypt with the title of *idmw* "representative [of Pharaoh]" received from his predecessor (Tutankhamun), during the first 14 years of his reign⁵³, before taking the conventional title 'King (*nsw bity*)'. The enthronement of Joseph in the Bible is a good example of this procedure: *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Abrek [pay attention?]: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah ["The god said: He will live"]; and he gave him to wife Asenath [ns-n.t "she belongs to Neith"] the daughter of Potipherah [p3-di-p3-r' "the one has given Ra"] priest of On (iwnw Heliopolis). And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt (...) So Joseph went and told Pharaoh, 'My father and brothers have arrived from Canaan with their flocks and all they have have come from the land of Canaan. (Genesis 41:41-45; 47:1-6). There is no trace*

of Joseph in Egyptian documents, but the investiture ceremony is quite consistent with Egyptian customs that describe the enthronement of a vizier, second person of State (opposite figure), robed in fine linen, receiving his gold collar and signet-seal of office⁵⁴.



⁵⁰ É. MARTINET – Le Nomarque sous l'Ancien Régime Paris 2011 Éd. Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne pp. 233-235.

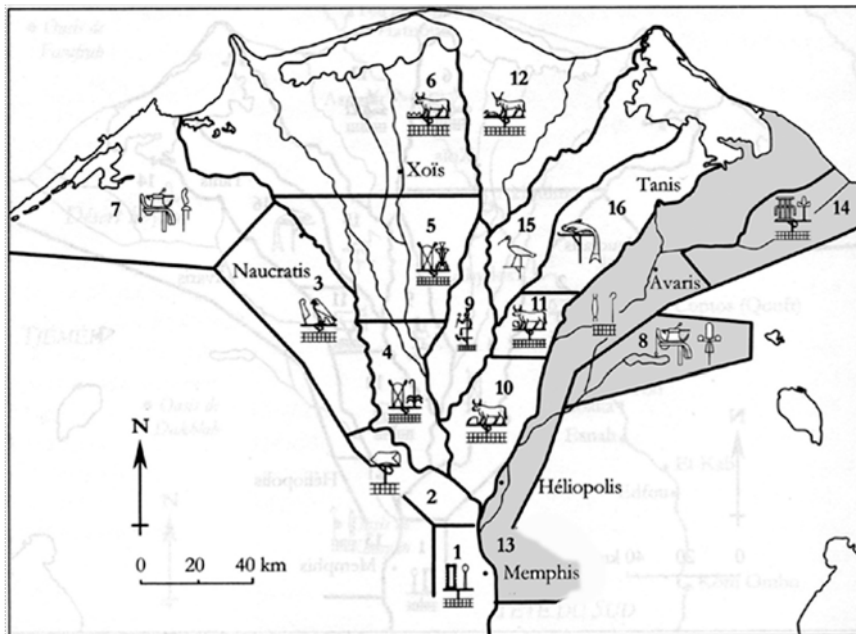
⁵¹ A. ROCCATI – La littérature historique sous l'ancien empire égyptien in: LAPO 11 Paris 1982 Éd. Cerf pp. 134-135, 191-195, 309.

⁵² The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 2, Part 1 Cambridge 1973 Ed. Cambridge University Press pp. 348-349.

⁵³ W.J. MURNANE – Ancient Egyptian Coregencies in: *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* Vol. 16 (1979) p. 189.

⁵⁴ K.A. KITCHEN – On the Reliability of the Old Testament Cambridge 2003 Ed. Eerdmans Publishing Company p. 640.

The biblical account is consistent with linguistic, geography⁵⁵ and timescale, since the date of Joseph's enthronement (in 1758 BCE) is at the time of Pharaoh Amenemhat VI (1760?-1755?). It is known that Amenemhat V (1776?-1770?), a predecessor, ruled the north of Egypt, because a stele to his name has been found in the Nile Delta (in Athribis) and a successor, Hetepibre Hornedjheritef (1755-1750?), has his name preceded by his affiliation *sa aamu* "son of Asiatics (plural)". Also known is the pyramid of King Ameny *Aamu*. A baton of command bearing the name Hotepibre was found at Ebla (Syria). On the site of Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris), there is a vast palace whose existence was brief⁵⁶, a few years at most, and it has not even been completed. This building dates from the beginning of the 13th Dynasty. Various details — including the discovery of a cylinder seal "Ruler of Retenu" in a style typically Syrian, lack of foundation deposits, remains of animals' offerings in a circular pit — are foreign to Egyptian habits and make think from Asia to a Canaanite influence. This palace could be the 'summer residence' of the king of Egypt *son of aamu*, Hetepibre, whose statue was found 100 meters away⁵⁷. The pharaohs of the 13th dynasty ruled Lower Egypt so on until Pharaoh Sobekhotep IV (1686-1677), but eastern part of the Delta was under Asiatic influence. If the Pharaohs of the 13th Dynasty had brief reigns, their viziers exerted their function over periods apparently longer. However, only few viziers of the early 13th dynasty, until Sobekhotep IV, are known⁵⁸. The very short duration of reign of the kings belonging to the 14th and 16th dynasties involves more a position of nomarch than king. Only kings of the 15th Dynasty have comparable power to the kings of Egypt. The name of Egyptian nomes of Lower Egypt⁵⁹ confirm the existence of regions where Asiatics (Canaanites, Syrians, Israelites, etc.) were inhabiting. For example, the nome 8, capital Pithom (Tell el-Maskhutah) is called "Oriental harpoon" (*hnmw i3btj*), the nome 13, capital Heliopolis (El-Matariyah), is called "Orient Prince of Levant" (*hq3 'ndw*) and the nome 14, capital Tjaru (Tell Hebua), is called "Orient" (*i3b.t*). Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a), Bubastis (Tell Basta) and Tanis (San el-Hagar) were in northern part of the nome 13.



⁵⁵ The capital of Egypt was located north until early of 17th dynasty.

⁵⁶ Most of sealing impressions found in Avaris bear the name of King Khyan and one possible Apopi (I. FORSTNER-MÜLLER, M. BIETAK, M. LEHMANN, C. REALI -Report on the Excavations at Tell El-Daba'a 2011).

⁵⁷ C. VANDERSLEYEN – L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 129.

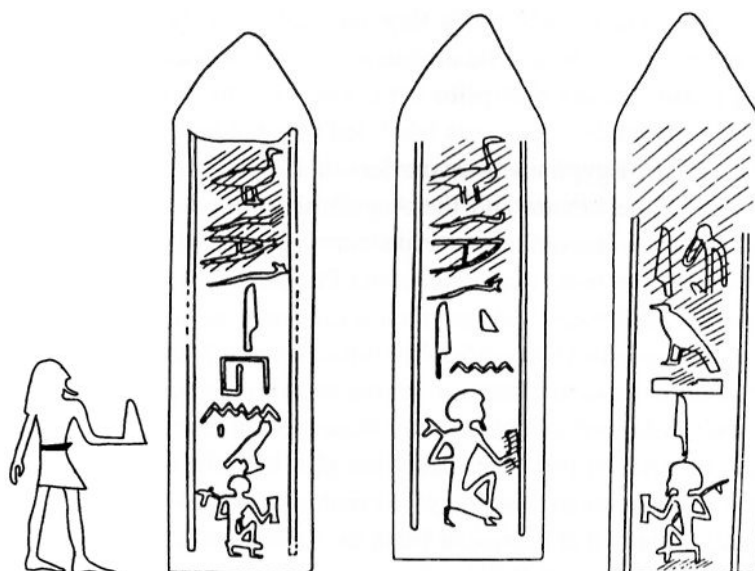
⁵⁸ S. QUIRKE – Middle Kingdom Studies New Malden 1991 Ed. SIA Publishing pp. 123-139.

⁵⁹ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 755-775.

The remains of Hyksos kings in Egypt are low at least for two reasons: these foreign kings, having had only a limited power in Egypt (mainly in the Delta), have hardly constructed monuments, in addition, the departure of the Hyksos into Palestine having affected following pharaohs very badly all their works were either destroyed or severely mutilated as this statue (opposite figure) of a dignitary Hyksos, dated the beginning of the 14th dynasty, identified thanks to his hair and the cross on his shoulder⁶⁰. The Museum of Antiquities in Cairo also has a Middle Kingdom funerary mask⁶¹ of the Hyksos period which identifying indicia are gone, however the outstanding representation of beard on a sarcophagus is a typically Semitic practice.



According to Manfred Bietak⁶², Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos (250 ha), was composed of at least 30,000 inhabitants, most of them being Asiatics. It appears that they collaborated harmoniously with the Egyptians. Archaeological excavations have also revealed their link with the south of Palestine⁶³. Thus, the weapons found in the tombs of Tell el Dab'a (site of Avaris) have a Syro-Palestinian origin for 80% of them. Similarly, 74% of the pottery had been imported from Southern Palestine. The Hyksos did not mummify their dead, unlike the Egyptians, thus indicating a different conception of the afterlife. The information given by Josephus proved so reliable, again, the biblical details regarding the manufacture of bricks made of clay and straw, the frames of acacia, are indeed typical of Egypt, but unknown in Palestine. It has been found at Avaris the effigy of Imeni (looks like Amen "faithfull"), a Hyksos officer (recognizable by his beard), who seems proud to be Asiatic. On a small obelisk from Serabit el-Khadim we can see representations of Western Asiatic soldiers holding duckbill axes.



⁶⁰ BASOR 281 (1991) pp. 34,49,50.

⁶¹ Referenced TR 7.9.33.1.

⁶² M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go? in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 148-149.

⁶³ C. BOOTH - The Hyksos Period in Egypt Buckinghamshire 2005 Ed. Shire Publications pp. 1-53.

Geographical and chronological data⁶⁴ provided by biblical and Egyptian accounts: a people from Syria-Palestine arrived in Egypt around 1750 BCE and left home about 1530 BCE, so well overlap. The reports archaeological of Bietak show that Semites of Syria-Palestine reached Avaris from the 13th dynasty, then disappeared at the beginning of the 18th dynasty. Historical evidence of the Hyksos, despite some uncertainties and inconsistencies are therefore quite consistent⁶⁵.

What was the language of the Hyksos and what was their religion? Analysis of their names⁶⁶ allows answering these two questions. The native language of the Hyksos should be Old Canaanite and they (for most of them) should worship Baal and not Seth, its Egyptian counterpart, because no theophoric name refers to Seth. For example, several name include the term baal as Baal-Tuya or [Ab]i-baal. This is particularly evident among the names of the Hyksos rulers⁶⁷:

- | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1) Hyksos Sakar-El / Sokar-her (<i>s-k-r-h-r</i>) | 1) | 2) | 3) | 4) | 5) |
| 2) Aper-Baal (<i>pr-b-ʿ3-r</i>) | | | | | |
| 3) Hyksos Aper-Anati (<i>pr-ʿn-ti</i>) | | | | | |
| 4) Yaqub-El / Yaqub-her (<i>y-ʿq-b-h-r</i>) | | | | | |
| 5) Yaqub-Baal (<i>y-ʿq-b-ʿr</i>) | | | | | |

Some Hyksos names transcribed into hieroglyphs are of Semitic origin (especially those beginning with y)⁶⁸, but others are Egyptian. It is often difficult to separate them because the phonetic transcription of these names is often approximate and fluctuating:

Y-ʿq-b-h-r	Y-ʿq-b-ʿr	Y-k-b-ʿr	I-p-p-i
Mri-ib-Rʿ	Š-š-i	Mʿ-ib-Rʿ	Y-n-s-s [idn]
			I-p-p-y

- Yaqub-El / Yaqub-her (*y-q-b-b-r* but *y-q-b-i-r* in Thutmose III's list) is of Canaanite origin but its meaning is less clear: "Supplanter [is] God" in Old Hebrew or "Jacob [is] glad" in Egyptian. The first meaning seems more likely, because Baal was considered interchangeable with El. Similarly, vocalization Sakar-El "Wage [of] God" in Old Hebrew is more appropriate than Sokar-her "Sokar [is] glad" in Egyptian. Sakar name appears in Is-sakar "There is a wage [of God]", a son of Jacob (Genesis 30:18).
- Aper-Baal is the name of the Lord Chancellor on the jamb of a chapel door found at Tell Hebua⁷¹ (dated to the Second Intermediate Period). The meaning can be understood either "offerings equipment [of] Anat" in Egyptian or "calf (Genesis 25:4) of Anat (Judges 3:31)" in Old Hebrew.
- Khyan (*h-y-3-n*) means nothing in Egyptian but "brotherly (*akhyan*)" in Old Hebrew, with an aphaeresis of the initial vowel (1Chronicles 7:19).
- Apopi (*i-ṯ-p-p-i*) is the name of the 15th Dynasty ruler *par excellence*. The fact that the name is usually written with the syllabic group *i-ṯ* would rather suggest that it was foreign in origin, just as all the other known names of kings and their treasurers of this Dynasty⁷². Apopi means nothing in Egyptian, but "splendid (*yepepia*)" in Old Hebrew (Jeremiah 46:20), close to the name Joppa (Joshua 19:46) meaning "beautiful". This name appears elsewhere in the Jerusalem Talmud (Nedarim 42c)⁷³ which states that a vow made on behalf of Apopi (יפופי) of Israel is valid. Some Jewish amulets⁷⁴ written in Greek are dedicated to IAO YPEPI "Iao Apopi" or to IAO CABAO MOUCE "Iao Sabaoth Moses".
- Meribre Sheshi (Mri-ib-R' Š-š-i) is clearly Egyptian and means "Beloved [by the] heart [of] Ra; Refined gold?".

The link between Old Canaanite and Old Hebrew is badly known because of the low number of documents. In addition, some words believed to be recent, because of their apparent absence in ancient documents (several examples arisen)⁷⁵, existed in fact for many centuries, but had "hibernated"⁷⁶. Old Canaanite is very old as Unas' pyramid already contains, toward 2300 BCE, some sentences in this language written phonetically with hieroglyphs⁷⁷. The fact that Egyptians loaned Canaanite words proves that there were many Canaanite inhabitants in Egypt from a remotest antiquity. The word *migdol* (Exodus 14:2), for example, *magdalu* in old Canaanite (letter EA 234), has been borrowed by the Egyptians toward 1800 BCE⁷⁸. The word *manna* "what? (Exodus 16:15)" is different from Hebrew *mā-hu* "what [is] it" some scholars have explained this discrepancy by a popular etymology based on the Syriac or late Aramaic. This erudite explanation is inaccurate because, in both languages, the word *manna* means "who" and not "what". The form of the interrogative pronouns in ancient Semitic languages⁷⁹, is:

⁷¹ M. ABD EL-MAKSOUDE – Tell Heboua (1981-1991)

Paris 1998 Éd. Recherche sur les Civilisations pp. 271-272.

J. YOYOTTE – En Égypte, le faux mystère des dynasties hyksos

in: *Le monde de la Bible* n°146 (novembre 2002) pp. 42-43.

⁷² K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period

Copenhagen 1997 Ed. The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies p. 129.

⁷³ J. BONSIRVEN – Textes rabbiniques des deux premiers siècles chrétiens

Rome 1955 Éd. Pontificio Istituto Biblico p. 1376.

⁷⁴ E.R. GOODENOUGH – Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period

New York 1953 Ed. Pantheon Books vol. 2 p. 220, vol. 3 n°1027, n°1135.

⁷⁵ A.R. MILLARD – The Tell Fekheriyeh Inscriptions

in: *Biblical Archaeology Today* 1990. Jerusalem 1993, Ed. Israel Exploration Society p. 523

A.R. MILLARD – A Lexical Illusion in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31 (1986) pp. 1-3.

⁷⁶ For example, the rare and "recent" word *ketem* "gold" (Job 28:16,19), already existed in Akkadian (*ketimū*) from the Sumerian KU-DIM which meant "goldsmith" (prior 2000 BCE).

⁷⁷ R.C. STEINER – Early Northwest Semitic Serpent Spells in the Pyramid Texts

in: *Harvard Semitic Studies* 61. Indiana 2011, pp. 77-84.

⁷⁸ J. SEGUIN – Le Migdol du Proche-Orient à l'Égypte

Paris 2007 Éd. Presses de l'Université Paris-Sorbonne pp. 28-30, 149.

⁷⁹ E. LIPINSKI – Semitic Languages Outline of a Comparative Grammar

in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 80. Leuven 2001 Ed. Peeters pp. 336,337,560,575.

Language	Who	What	attested between		Tower
Old Egyptian	m	m	-2500	-1500	m(i)-k-ti-l
Old Akkadian	man	min	-2500	-2000	
Assyro-Babylonian	mannu(m)	mīnu(m)	-1900	-600	magdala
Amorite	manna	ma	-2500	-1500	
Ugaritic	my	mh, mn	-1500	-1100	mgdl
Old Canaanite (Old Hebrew)	miya	manna	-1800	-1100	magdalu
Phoenician	my	m	-1000	300	
Hebrew	mī[y]	mā[n]	-1000	500	migdol
Aramaic	man	mā	-900	200	
Syriac	man	mā	0	200	

The word *manna* existed in Old Canaanite and meant "what", it is written *ma-an-na* (vocalization preserved by the Septuagint and the New Testament) in a letter dated around 1350 BCE found in El-Amarna (EA 286). Old Canaanite is a kind of Old Hebrew tinged with Akkadian⁸⁰ (Old Canaanite lexicon with a Babylonian grammar), which was used by scribes (Semites) in their correspondence with Canaan (Old Canaanite gave way to Hebrew after 1100 BCE). The word *hanikayw* "his men of elite" in Genesis 14:14 is another example proving high antiquity of Old Hebrew. This hapax, which the exact meaning was not yet known long ago, was discovered in some Egyptian execration texts dated 1900-1800 to qualify "men of elite" who belonged to Canaanite rulers. This rare word⁸¹ appears then for the last time, in a text found at Taanach dated 1500-1400.

Old Canaanite (or Old Hebrew) as Semitic language could be written thanks to cuneiform or in hieroglyphs, but sounds' equivalence being imperfect in the first case and cursive writing, even in hieratic, being difficult in the second case, a new writing more adapted has been born at Serabit el-Khadim during the 15th Dynasty⁸². Several inscriptions in proto-Canaanite have been discovered in Egypt (Serabit el-Khadim in Sinai and Wadi el-Hôl⁸³ north of Thebes) and in Palestine (Lachish, Gezer and Shechem). These inscriptions are difficult to date, between 1850 and 1500 BCE for Serabit el-Khadim and 1600-1500 for those in Palestine but the oldest epigraphs in paleo-Hebrew are dated around 1500 BCE⁸⁴.

Serabit el-Khadim



Lachish



Gezer



⁸⁰ S. IZRE'EL - Canaano-Akkadian

Munich 2005 Ed. Licom Europa pp. 1-4.

⁸¹ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 208-209.

⁸² A. LEMAIRE - Les «Hyksos» et les débuts de l'écriture alphabétique au Proche-Orient in: Des signes pictographiques à l'alphabet (Karthala, 2000) pp.103-133.

⁸³ J. COLEMAN DARNELL, F.W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, M.J. LUNDBERG, P. KYLE MCCARTER, B. ZUCKERMAN - Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions from the Wadi el-Hôl in: *The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 59 (2005), pp. 73-110.

⁸⁴ The name Ali-din-ili KU-UB-[-] written in cuneiform is also written in Paleo-Hebrew as 'LDN'L GB' on the edge of the tablet.

S. DALLEY - Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology* Vol. 9 (CDL Press, 2009) pp. 1-4.

L. COLONNA D'ISTRIA - Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* N°3 (2012) pp. 61-63.

The inscription contains an Egyptian hieroglyphic text: « Beloved by Hathor of [the mistress of] turquoise (*mry hthr [nbt] mfk3t*) », and two proto-Canaanite texts: « Beloved by the Mistress (*m'bb'l[t]*) » and « to the Mistress (*lb'lt*) ». The inscriptions from Palestine seem to have only proper names: Kaleb? (Lachish); Turanza? (Gezer). Proper names are also a valuable source of information about the religion of people who bear them, because they contain the names of really worshiped deities. This shows that the Hyksos did only worshiped Canaanite gods, Baal being the main one. The term *baal* is not a proper name, but a Semitic word meaning "Master, Lord, Patron, Owner, Head [of family]." Baal was called⁸⁵: Ada in Ebla, Addu in Mari, Hd in Ugarit, etc⁸⁶, and had a local cult, as shown by the expressions: Baal of Zaphon "Master of the North", Baal of Peor "Master of Peor" (Exodus 14:2, Numbers 25:5), etc. Balaam invokes the god of the Israelites on "high places of Baal" (Numbers 22:41-23:12) and David refers to God as "Master of Breakings" (2Samuel 5:20). Only the worship of Baal was sentenced but the use of this term referring to God as Master remained legitimate. Thus, some Israelites had theophoric names in Baal as Bealyah "Master [is] Yah", Baalyada "Master knows", Baalhanan "Master has favoured" (1Chronicles 12:5, 14:7, 27:28). However, after the fall of Samaria (in 720 BCE), using the term *baal* "Master" for God was banned: *You will call me my Husband, and you will no longer call me my Baal* (Hosea 2:16-18) to avoid idolatry (Judges 2:13). Copyists even changed the names of Baal in Israelite names, replacing *baal* by *boshet* "shame", as Jerubbaal into Jerubbeshet and Ishbaal into Ishboshet (1Samuel 12:11, 2Samuel 2:8, 11:21). The term *adon* "Lord" will remain lawful (Deuteronomy 10:17). Egyptian religion was syncretic, equating systematically Canaanite gods with their gods who resembled them. Representations of Seth and Baal are quite similar. Several seals from Avaris⁸⁷ show Baal, a Syrian god of lightning, with a scepter and wearing a horned helmet with a braid. The two horns appear on the helmet of the "Baal of lightning" unearthed in Ugarit and dated around -1500. Seth "Master of the Storm" was the Egyptian version of the Baal of Canaan, so there was a technical equivalence between two terms⁸⁸ but Hyksos people worshiped Baal⁸⁹, not Seth its Egyptian counterpart, because no Hyksos name refers to Seth.



Seth (Egypt)



Baal (Ugarit)



Baal/Seth (Avaris)

⁸⁵ E. LIPINSKI - Baal

in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible Éd. Brepols 1987 p. 172.

⁸⁶ Similarly, the Mesopotamian god ʾISKUR could be read either Adad or Addu, Tešub, etc., according to the country.

⁸⁷ D. COLLON - New Seal Impressions from Tell El-Dab'a

in: Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak Vol. II (2006) pp. 97-101.

⁸⁸ N. ALLON - Seth is Baal — Evidence from the Egyptian Script

in: *Ägypten und Levante* XVII Wien 1997 pp. 15-22.

⁸⁹ Moses' mother was Jochebed (Exodus 6:20) whom name means "Jo[va] is glory".

Ramses II employed the two terms interchangeably as shown in his poem⁹⁰ written after the Battle of Kadesh: *And the vile conquered Prince of Hatti sent a message to honour the name of my majesty, the equal of Ra, in these terms: You're Sutekh, Baal himself. The fear that you inspire is a flame in the country of Hatti.* In the treaty between Ramses II and Hattusil III one reads: *Seth, whose strength is great (...) see, Hattusil great prince of the Hittites, is party to a treaty to restore relations had established Ra, that Sutekh established for the land of Egypt and the land of Hatti (...) the lord of the sky god Ra, the god Re of the city of Arinna, Sutekh lord of heaven, Sutekh of the Hittites, Sutekh of the city of Arinna.* The treaty was sealed for "Seth, ruler of heaven." The character used to Seth was vocalized Baal (b-ʿr) in some Egyptian inscriptions⁹¹:



Ramses III had four divisions of 5000 men including one named Seth and six charreries, one of which called Baálherkhopshef "Baal is on my sword"⁹², which confirms the similar role of these deities. So when Seqenenre Taa criticized Apopi for exclusively worshipping Seth, he actually aimed his Baal⁹³ "Lord". Thus, the chief god of the Hyksos was Baal, the Lord of heaven and earth in the land of Canaan.

To sum up: the "rulers of foreign lands" (*Hyksos*) consisted mainly of "Asiatics" (*aamu*), or "Canaan's people", living for most of them in Syria-Palestine (*Retenu*) and worshipped their "Lord" (Baal/Seth).

When the Hyksos left Egypt at the beginning of the XVIIIth dynasty (c. 1500 BCE) they disappear definitively from Egyptian records, however at the same time appear in Palestine the Bedouins called Shasu. Archaeologists do not establish any link between the disappearance of the Hyksos in Egypt and the appearance of Shasu in Palestine. The name Shasu means "wandering" in Egyptian and were called Habiru "emigrants" (in Akkadian) by Canaanites⁹⁴. This identification is confirmed by the Egyptian priest Manetho himself. He explains the word as Hyksos from *hyk-sos* "King Shepherd", which is relatively accurate, because the Egyptian word *heq* means "ruler/chief" and the word *sos* actually means "shepherd". Sahidic translation (late Egyptian) of Genesis 47:6: *if you know any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle*, used for example the word *sos* to describe these "rulers of cattle". The Hyksos word actually comes from the Egyptian *heqaw ha'sw.t* "Rulers of foreign lands", but Manetho connected it to the Shasu appeared later and thus translated it as "Rulers of shepherds" *heqaw sosw* (in Egyptian *ššs* means "travelling"). Studies on Shasu⁹⁵ tend to rehabilitate this so-called popular etymology. In fact, the Egyptians understood the word *shasu* as a common noun designating semi-sedentary shepherds staying mainly in the south of Palestine. They used the phrase "Lands of Shasu", which shows that they originally included this phrase as a geographical designation. The fact that they wrote the word sometimes *shas* (*ššs*) "wandering" instead of the usual *shasu* (*ššsw*) also shows that they originally included the word as a synonym for "transhumant".

⁹⁰ P. GRANDET – Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 322,343,344.

⁹¹ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 51,118.

J.E. HOCH – Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period
Princeton 1994 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 93-95.

⁹² P. GRANDET – Ramsès III histoire d'un règne
Paris 2009 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 166, 170.

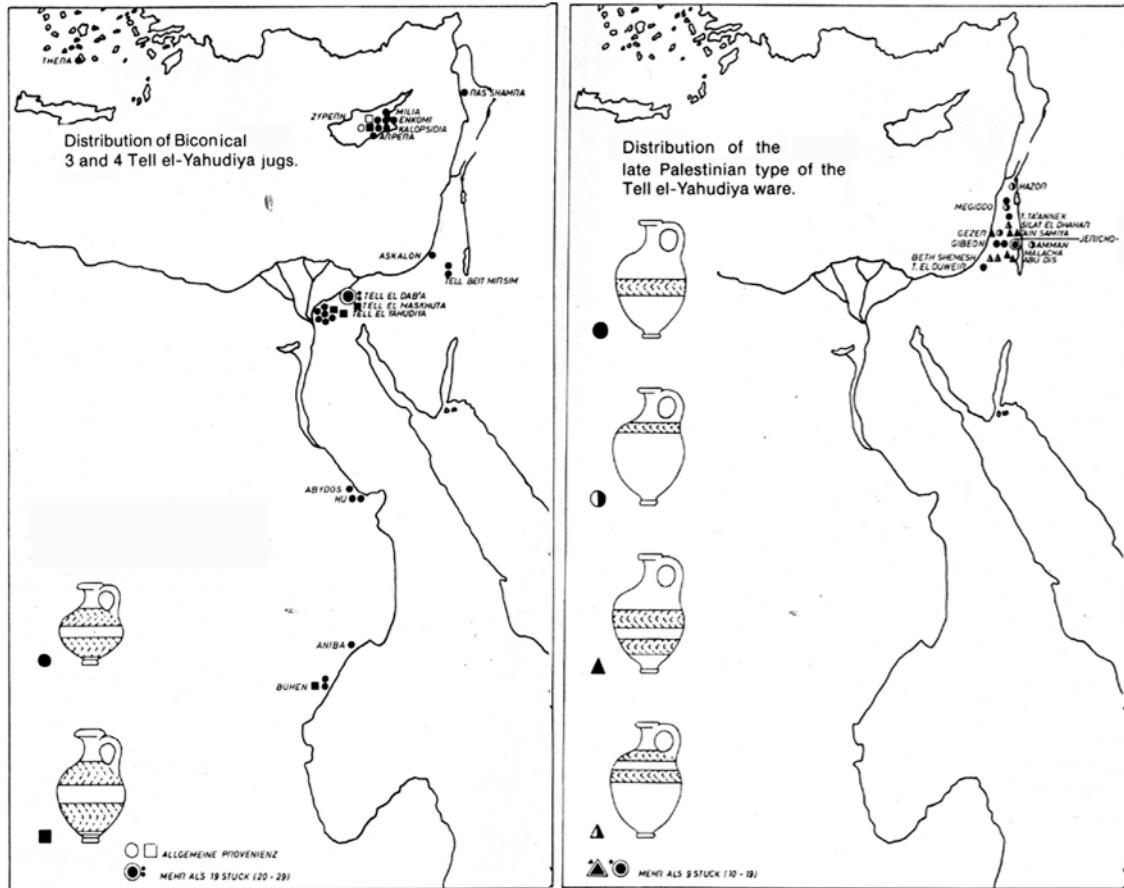
⁹³ Z. MAYANI – Les Hyksos et le monde de la Bible
Paris 1956 Éd. Payot pp. 122-128.

⁹⁴ D. CHARPIN – Hammu-rabi de Babylone
Paris, 2003, Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 238.

⁹⁵ M.G. HASEL - Domination and Resistance. Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant
Leiden 1998 Ed. Brill pp. 217-239.

THE SHASU: WHERE DID THEY COME FROM AND WHO WERE THEY ?

The spatial and temporal distribution of Tell el-Yahudiyeh Ware (which is a distinctive ceramic ware of the late Middle Bronze Age name from its type site at Tell el-Yahudiyeh "Mountain of the Jews")⁹⁶, confirms that the Shasu's civilization in Canaan was identical to that of the Hyksos in Egypt:



Several Egyptian depictions confirm the link between former Hyksos and Shasu, as hairstyle and the use of a particular weapon: a curved trencher or scimitar⁹⁷. These Shasu warriors are portrayed on Egyptian frescoes with this weapon, already used by the Hyksos (and by the Egyptians who had borrowed them) and before by the Sumerians⁹⁸ (like King E-anatum toward -2300). This ax of Canaanite type called *garzen*, was very common in the East and was also used by the Israelites (Deuteronomy 20:19).



⁹⁶ M. BIETAK – Egypt and Canaan During the Middle Bronze Age in *BAJOR* 281 (1991) pp. 58-59.

⁹⁷ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 248-254.

⁹⁸ J. B. PRITCHARD - The Ancient Near East in Pictures Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press p. 95.

As Moses' name does not appear in any Egyptian document and the pharaoh of the Exodus is not named in the Bible, archaeologists conclude (obviously) that this major event can not be identified. This conclusion is staggering for two reasons 1) Manetho clearly states that Moses used his nickname ("Water's son") only after his entering Palestine, prior he was called Osarsiph (Auserre-Apopi) and 2) the biblical text provides many details which can be easily identified in Egyptian records (see *Dating the War of the Hyksos*), as:

According to the biblical account	According to Egyptian accounts
A Hebrew baby "very pretty (<i>yepepiah</i>)" is adopted by Pharaoh's daughter who gave him the Egyptian nickname Musa. This young Hebrew is established as prince in Egypt for 40 years from 1613 to 1573 BCE.	A Semitic king named Apopi reigned 40 years (TC) in Egypt from 1613 to 1573 BCE. He was the last king (Auserre) of the XV th dynasty and was the only Hyksos receiving the title "Pharaoh" (<i>nesu bity</i>).
After spending 40 years in Midian, that former Egyptian ruler came back to Egypt and met an anonymous Pharaoh to inform him the departure of the Hebrews in Palestine and the death of all the firstborn at the time of the Passover including his eldest son, who was crown prince.	About 40 years later the former pharaoh Apopi met Seqenenre Taa the last pharaoh of the XVII th dynasty and gave him an unspecified disturbing message. The eldest son of Seqenenre Taa, Ahmose Sapaïr, who was crown prince died in a dramatic and unexplained way shortly before his father.
One month after the Passover the anonymous Pharaoh tried catching up the Hebrews with his chariots of war to force them returning into Egypt, but he died in the Red Sea with his whole army, May 10, 1533 BCE during a solar eclipse.	After their massive departure into Palestine the Hyksos disappeared Egypt definitively. Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa died in May 1533 BCE, after 11 years of reign, in dramatic and unclear circumstances. The state of his mummy proves, however, that his body received severe injuries and remained abandoned for several days before being mummified.
The Hebrews began their stay in Sinai and tried to enter by force in Canaan but were repulsed by the Amalekites. Then they will spend 40 years in the Sinai desert before returning permanently in Canaan.	Prince Kamose, Seqenenre Taa's brother, assured interim of authority for 3 years and threatened attack the former pharaoh Apopi, new prince of Retenu (Palestine). In the stele of the Tempest he also blames him for all the disasters that come to fall upon Egypt which caused many deaths.
At the end of 40 years of exodus (in 1493 BCE) Moses wrote the Pentateuch under his "given name" Muša and caught a glimpse of the promised land, near Jericho, before dying. The following year the Hebrews began the conquest of Canaan burning three major cities: Jericho, Ai, and Hazor.	According to the Carbon 14, the cities of Jericho, Ai, and Hazor were burned around 1500 BCE. Hazor being the capital of Canaan at that time the only ones able to defeat her were the Hyksos (the Egyptians did not come in this region). The Shasu suddenly appear in Palestine (mentioned for the first time under Thutmosis I).
The Hebrews settled gradually in Canaan and expelled only partly the Canaanites. The period of the Judges begins with Joshua.	Queen Hatshepsut wrote (in Speos Artemidos): <i>I restored what have been devastated, I levied the foremost draft since Asiatics were in the region of Avaris of Lower Egypt. Resident aliens among them were disregarding the assigned tasks. They ruled without Re' (...) I have banished the abomination of the gods, the earth removed their footprints!</i>

Egyptologists refute these coincidences on the grounds that both biblical accounts and Egyptian narratives, draw on common myths! They claim that Egyptians were known as being fantasists and Israelites similarly (only present Egyptologists are obviously not fantasist). They claim that the Shasu Bedouins were Canaanite nomad tribes who were integrated inside small Canaanite kingdoms, vassals of Egypt and consequently "Israel" did not exist at that time because this name is not found.

Although there was little conflict between Egypt and Palestine during the period 1500-1000 BCE an accurate dating of burned cities, as well as the identification of "culprits", clearly refutes the "tales" from Egyptologists and archaeologists. For example, the state of the mummy of Seqenenre, especially his head indicating serious injury, is eloquent

(opposite picture), this pharaoh died, aged 30 to 40 years, in a very violent manner and it took quite a long time before his mummification. Although this event was exceptional the Egyptians are absolutely silent about this death, but it is not the case of Egyptologists who explain that Seqenenre was probably slaughtered by at least two Hyksos soldiers by the means of their axes (some Egyptologists even specify that the axes were used from the bottom to up). These explanations are ridiculous because the Egyptians would have left decompose the corpse of their pharaoh before its mummifying, what would have been a blasphemy. Moreover, as the ribs and vertebrae are fractured and dislocated⁹⁹, Seqenenre had to be attacked by two "Terminators"!



The stele of year 3 of Kamose¹⁰⁰ (1531 BCE) reads: *How do I should recognize, my victory, with a prince (wr) in Avaris and another in Kush, I who have been enthroned in company with an Asiatic (3m) and a Nubian (nhsy)? Each has his part in this Egypt (...) he (Apopi) holds Asiatic country (Delta) and we hold Egypt (...) I ransacked your place of residence, I cut your trees after having put your wives in (my) slipway and I took possession of carriages. I have not left a board from the 300 ships (made) of fresh pine which were full of gold, lapis lazuli, silver, turquoise, bronze axes without number, excluding oil moringa, incense, honey, wood-ituren, wood-sesenedjem, wood-sepen, all precious woods and all beautiful imports from Retenu. I have taken everything, I have nothing left, Avaris is doomed to penury, the Asiatic perished (...) I'll show Apopi time of the weakness, he the prince (sr) of Retenu to weak arms, who devises in his heart heroic acts without occurring in his favour (...) I found there the written retranscription of the words from the ruler (hq3) of Avaris: « Aauserre, the son of Ra, Apopi, send greetings to (my) son, Ruler (hq3) of Kush. Why did you set up as ruler (hq3) without letting me know? According to Pharaoh Kamose, the Asiatics (aamu) who were in the Delta at that time have followed Apopi, the leader of Avaris (Hyksos' capital) and last former pharaoh of the XVth Hyksos dynasty (40 years earlier), who had became ruler of Palestine (Retenu). This departure was made under dramatic conditions, because in the "stele of the storm" or "Tempest Stele"¹⁰¹ (dated year 1, 1530 BCE), Pharaoh Ahmose explains: [Then] the gods [made] the sky come in a storm of rain, with darkness in the western region and the sky beclouded without [stop, louder] than [the sound of] the subjects, stronger than ..., howling(?) on the hills more than the sound of the cavern in Elephantine. Then every house and every habitation they reached [perished and those in them died, their corpses] floating on the water like skiffs of papyrus, (even) in the doorway and the private apartments (of the palace), for a period of up to [...] days, while no torch could give light over the Two Lands. Then His Incarnation said: How much greater is this than the impressive manifestation of the great god, than the plans of the gods! (...) Then His Incarnation commanded to make firm the temples that had fallen to ruin in this entire land: to make functional the monuments of the gods, to erect their enclosure walls, to put the sacred things in the special room. to hide the secret places, to cause the processional images that were fallen to the ground to enter their shrines, to set up the braziers, to erect the altars and fix their offering-loaves, to double the income of office-holders — to put the land like its original situation. Archaeologists estimate that this stele describes a mythological battle whose interpretation escapes us.*

C. Vandersleyen¹⁰², despite offering a fictionalized version of the 'liberation war of the Hyksos', notes that: *The New Kingdom began in a strange silence of sources. What happened there after the 3rd year of Kamose? (...) It is curious that the most important event in the history of Egypt during an entire millennium, the annihilation of the Hyksos population, was ignored in the inscriptions of King Ahmose dealing with something quite different: a storm that destroyed the cemetery of Thebes, his concern*

⁹⁹ A.-P. LECA – Les momies

Paris 1976 Éd. Librairie Hachette pp. 147-148.

¹⁰⁰ L. HABACHI – The Second Stela of Kamose and his Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and his Capital Glückstadt 1972 Ed. Verlag J.J. Augustin pp. 31-67.

¹⁰¹ M. WIENER, J.P. ALLEN Separate Lives: The Ahmose Tempest Stela and the Theban Eruption in: *Near Eastern Studies* 57 (1998) 1 pp. 1-28.

¹⁰² C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2 Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 190, 193, 213, 232-237.

about the perpetuation of his grandmother, Queen Teti-Sheri, some gifts offered to the temple of Amun at Karnak, the wise government of his mother, Queen Abhotep, etc., but not the main conquest of his reign. From Pharaoh Ahmose, the Hyksos disappear totally of Egyptian documents.

The first information about Asiatics appears with Ahmose-Pennekhbet¹⁰³, a former Egyptian general, who recounts in his biography that at the time of [enthronement of] Thutmose II (c. -1472) he made prisoners in Nubia and Naharin [Mitanni] and during a punitive expedition in the North (Canaan), some Shasu were on his passage forcing him to crush them: *I followed the king Aakheperenre (Thutmose II), justified, what I brought from the country Shasu: many prisoners alive. I could not count them.* The term "country" (line 2) indicates a large area (inside Canaan) where the Bedouins Shasu permanently resided.



Under the Thutmose III's reign (1472-1418), information about Asiatics and Shasu in Canaan become more numerous. After his 1st campaign into Retenu, dated in the year 23 of his reign (c. 1450 BCE), this text¹⁰⁴ appears (below): ³*All lands and all foreign countries, subdued, are under his sandals, one went to him head down, and bowing in front of his lightning. Foreign rulers [Hyksos] over the entire Earth recognize: He [Thutmose III] is our master. It is he who has made them come back to him by the fear he inspires.* ⁴*There is no country that he has trampled to expand the borders of Egypt by victories, thanks to his power. Neither millions nor hundreds of thousands of men put off his courage. It is a brave king who, in the melee, made great slaughters among Asiatic coalitions.* ⁵*He is the one that makes rulers of Retenu's land, in their entirety, to be required to provide their tribute and be subject to the annual tax like the people who depend on his palace.* ⁶*He is more effective alone than an army of many thousands of men. He is a so valiant fighter that no one can match in the entire country, neither in his army, nor among foreign rulers [Hyksos], nor South, nor North. This is a king who deserves his power exalted as much as his valour. Egypt has increased since his inception: it fears no other country, it has not to worry about the South, nor to worry about the North (...)* ⁸*The lands of Min and Kush were its subjects, offering it their production of gold, in abundance, ivory and ebony, without limit. There was no king who has done what he has done among all the kings that have existed so far.* The boastful tales of this pharaoh, coalesce in the same feud: rulers of foreign lands (Hyksos), rulers of Retenu's land and Asiatics coalitions (northern part of Megiddo)¹⁰⁵.

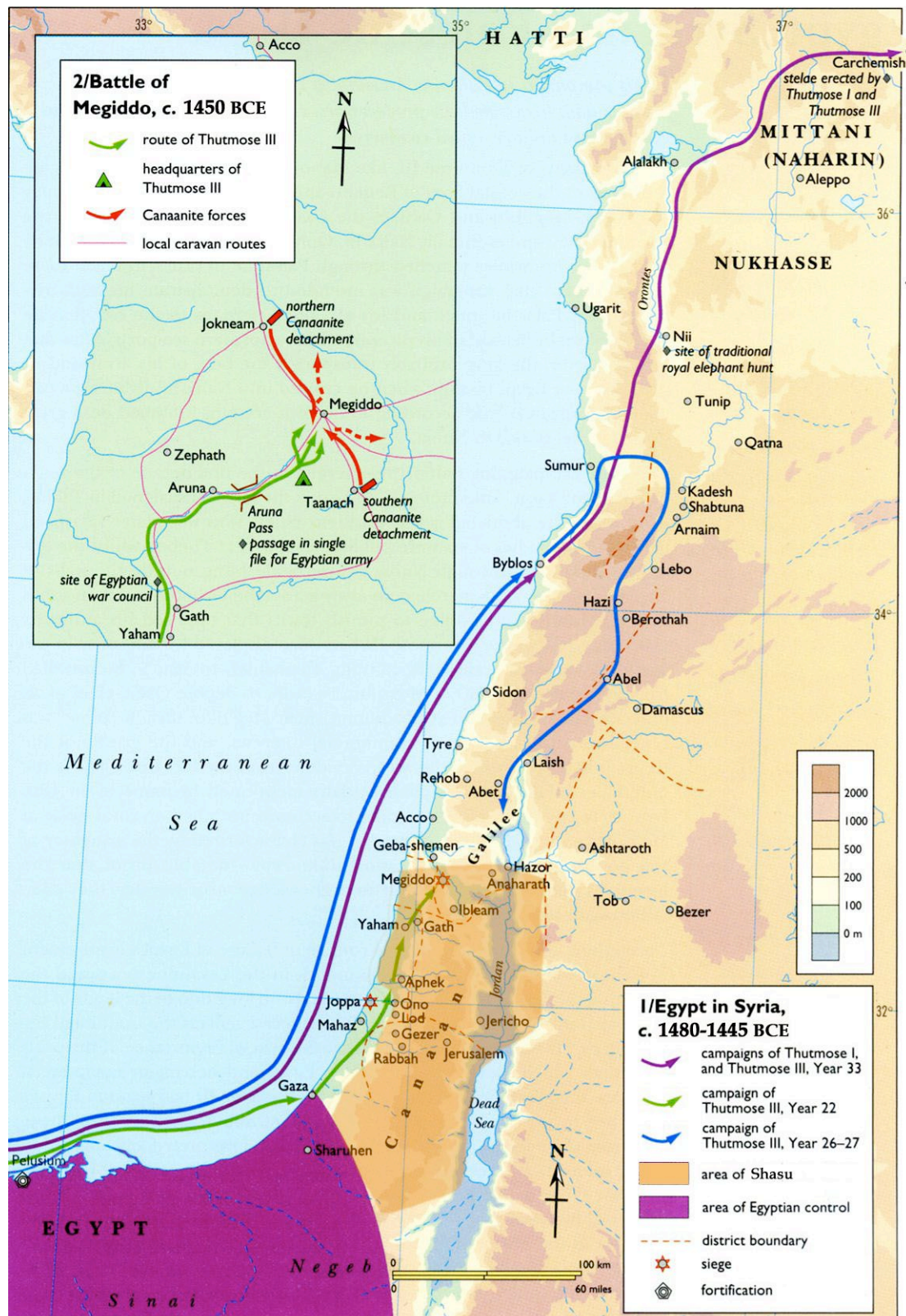


¹⁰³ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 9-10.

¹⁰⁴ A.S. VON BOMHARD - Le calendrier Égyptien. Une œuvre d'éternité
London 1999 Ed. Periplus pp. 42-43.

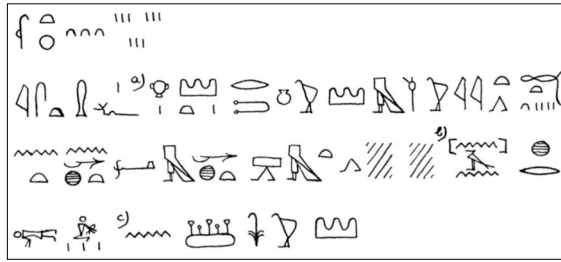
¹⁰⁵ P. GRANDET - Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 89,295-303.

In the topographical lists of Thutmose III about this campaign no place is cited in southern Palestine¹⁰⁶, usually associated with Shasu, with the exception of the Negeb. The Egyptians therefore met few Shasu only around Megiddo.



¹⁰⁶ B. MANLEY – Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypte
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 70-73.

Thutmose III also claims in his annals (text opposite), that during his 14th campaign (dated 1434 BCE) he stayed in Retenu after defeating the Shasu land: *Year 39: His Majesty was in Retenu land during his 14th successful campaign after he had (to do) the vanquished Shasu land.* This occurred long after the conquest of the Syrian port cities which enabled him to take the sea route to approach his northern enemies¹⁰⁷, its main purpose was to appease a rebellion, and at the same time, opening roads to the Egyptian army. This campaign against the land of Shasu was a secondary character but numerous Canaanite cities seized by the Israelites, like Hazor or Beth-Shean, passed under Egyptian control¹⁰⁸ (Judges 1:28-33; 3:1-5).



"Naharine" (Mesopotamia) became a political entity called "Mitanni" from its first king known as Kirta (1500-1485). Thus, from Thutmose III, Egyptian topographical lists¹⁰⁹ include both Naharine (*n-b-r-j-n*) and Mitanni (*m-t-n*). It is noteworthy that the period 1480-1450 BCE corresponds to a period of expansion westwards of Mitanni (as far as Syria), mainly due to the policy of conquest of two powerful kings¹¹⁰: Barattarna I (1480-1455) and Šauštatar I (1455-1435). The Egyptians were concerned about that aggressive expansion, thus during his 1st campaign, in year 22 (1450 BCE), Thutmose III states that he fought 330 rebel princes who were under the orders of the king of Kadesh and were thus indirectly in the wake of the "prince of Naharina". Šauštatar I the king of Mitanni (also called Hanigalbat) corresponds well to the biblical king of Aram-Naharaim called Cushan-rishathaim in Judges 3:8-10. However, the word Aram-Naharaim refers to a geographical area (land), not ethnic or linguistic, because kings of Mitanni were of Indo-Aryan origin and spoke Hurrian. The word *paddan* means "area" in Aramean thus the name *Paddan-Aram* (Genesis 47:8) could be translated as "area of Arameans"¹¹¹.

The area covered by the Mitanni during the 1500-1400 period was traveled by Aramaean tribes which came from Lower Mesopotamia¹¹². The term *Ahlamû* "Arameans" was used to designate nomadic enemies of Assyria¹¹³. Around 1350 BCE, the term *Ahlamû* (letter EA 200) was used to designate some disruptives in the Nippur area¹¹⁴ under Burna-Buriash II (1360-1333). The Amarna letters use it under the form *Naharima* (letter EA 288), a syllabic transcription of (Aram)-*Naharaim*, to designate a region also known by them as Mitanni (*Meṭen*). If at the time of David (c. -1050) the "kings of Aram" could be called "kings of Syria" (Damascus kingdom) four centuries earlier the area named Aram-Naharaim covered mainly Upper Mesopotamia. For example: *At this Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, so that he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram-Naharaim and the sons of Israel continued to serve Cushan-rishathaim 8 years. And the sons of Israel began to call to*

¹⁰⁷ T. SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH - The Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty
Uppsala 1946 Ed. Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift p. 39.

¹⁰⁸ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 242-243.

¹⁰⁹ J. SIMONS - Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia
Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 207-210.

¹¹⁰ J. FREU, R. LEBRUN - Histoire du Mitanni
Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 40-51.

¹¹¹ E. LIPINSKI - Paddan-Aram
in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible (Brépols, 1987) p. 949.

¹¹² F. JOANNÈS - Dictionnaire de la civilisation mésopotamienne
Paris 2001 Éd. Robert Laffont pp. 63-68.

¹¹³ D.D. LUCKENBILL - Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia I
Chicago 1926 Ed. University of Chicago Press §§ 73, 116, 166, 209.

¹¹⁴ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp.194-198.

A.T. CLAY - Documents from the Temple Archives of Nippur dated in the reigns of Cassite rulers
in: Babylonian Expedition (1906) Vol XIV p. 16; Vol XV pp. 44, 168.

Jehovah for aid. Then Jehovah raised a savior up for the sons of Israel that he might save them, Othniel the son of Kenaz the younger brother of Caleb. The spirit of Jehovah now came upon him, and he became the judge of Israel. When he went out to battle, then Jehovah gave Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram into his hand so that his hand overpowered [not slaughtered] Cushan-rishathaim (Judges 3:8-10). Cushan-rishathaim, the king of Aram-Naharaim (Mitanni), ruled the land Israel from 1452 to 1444 BCE. The name Cushan-rishataim was amended by derision because it means "Kushan of double wickedness" in Hebrew¹¹⁵ (see Jeremiah 50:21), the transcription Khousarsatos (*kušaršata?*) in the Septuagint is probably more authentic.

The Egyptian documents from Thutmose III's period and biblical texts provide both of them convergent information: a powerful king of the kingdom called Naharine (or Mitanni) led an aggressive expansionist policy towards the west around 1450 BCE. Moreover, the region called Palestine (Upper Retenu) had little or no contact with their neighbors at that time.

Archaeologists claim that Shasu were only a small tribe of nomads poorly localized, but according to the Egyptian documents of that time, they were at least several tens of thousands and their country in Palestine was considered as one of the nine enemy countries of Egypt. For example, Amenhotep II's stele (c. 1410 BCE) gives several ethnic information through a list of prisoners: *Great ones of Retenu land 127; Brothers of the Great ones 179; Apiru 3600; living Shasu 15200; Kharru land (Canaan) 36300;*



*living Nubasseh land (Syria) 15070, their families 30652; total amount 89600 (sic)*¹¹⁶. The high number of Shasu captured (some of whom will serve later in the Egyptian army), half of Kharru (Canaanites), shows that Shasu constituted a population of first magnitude at that time. It was not a small group of families who emigrated to Palestine, but, as argued by the biblical text, a large group of people. If the Egyptian text distinguishes Shasu and Apiru this does not prove that there was no link between these two groups, because the terms Shasu and Apiru were not proper names but common names. In the Amarna letters, the settlers conquering Palestine are 'Apiru "refugees"¹¹⁷ or Hapiru "migrants"¹¹⁸, with the meaning "rebels"¹¹⁹. The word Habiru means "migrants" in Semitic languages¹²⁰ hence its later meaning "wanderers". The list of Amenhotep II can be understood: Factious (Apiru) 3600, Bedouins (Shasu) 15200. If for Egyptians the Shasu, including those of Palestine, were perceived as wanderers, but all wanderers (or factious) were not Bedouins (Shasu). The biblical text itself states that the cities that had been conquered by the Israelites remained very variegated: *Manasseh did not dispossess Beth-Shean and its dependencies, nor Taanach and its dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Dor and its dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and its*

¹¹⁵ M. GUICHARD – Kushân-rishéatayim

in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible (Brepols, 1987) p. 724.

¹¹⁶ The number of living Nubasseh is likely to be 3570 (as for Apiru) instead of 15070.

¹¹⁷ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna in: *LIPO* n°13

Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 604-605.

¹¹⁸ M. GUICHARD - Les émigrés politiques au Proche-Orient ancien

in: *Dossiers d'Archéologie* n°300 février 2005 pp. 40-49.

¹¹⁹ N. NA'AMAN - Habiru and Hebrew: The transfer of a social Term to the Literary Sphere
in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45 (1986) pp. 271-288.

¹²⁰ J.M. DURAND - Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari

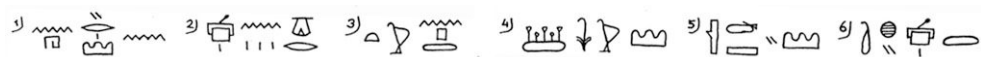
in: *LIPO* n°18 Paris 2000 Éd. Cerf p. 205.

R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 106-112, 202-208.

dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo and its dependencies; in those parts the Canaanites held their ground (...) The Amorites held their ground at Har-Heres and Shaalbim (Judges 1:27-35). According to figures from Amenhotep II' list, the Shasu (shepherds of Palestine) were four times more numerous than the Apiru (outlaws). Once again the Egyptians met few Shasu only in the norther part of Palestine.



The following list of six toponyms on a chariot of Thutmose IV (1392-1383) shows that Shasu land was considered potentially as a powerful enemy by the Egyptians:

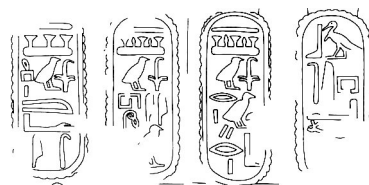


- 1) *N-h-r-j-n* Naharin land; 2) *S3-n-g-r* Shinar's; 3) *T-w-n-p* Tunip country; 4) *Š3-sw* Shasu land; 5) *Q-d-š* Qadesh land; 6) *Ti-h3-j-j-s3* Takhsi country.

In the tomb of Anen (TT120), brother-in-law of the king Amenhotep III (1383-1345), Shasu is pictured as one of the nine traditional enemies of Egypt (from right to left: 1) *S-n-g-3-r* Shinar land; 2) *Kš* Kush land (Nubia); 3) *N-h-r-j-n* Naharin people; 4) *'r-m* Arame; 5) *K-f-[ti-w]* Keftiu (Philistia); 6) *'Iwnti-Sty* Tentdwellers of Nubia; 7) *Thmw* Tehenu land (Libya); 8) *[Mn]hyw mw S3t* Bedouins of Sinai; 9) *Š3-sw* Shasu (Bedouins of Retenu):

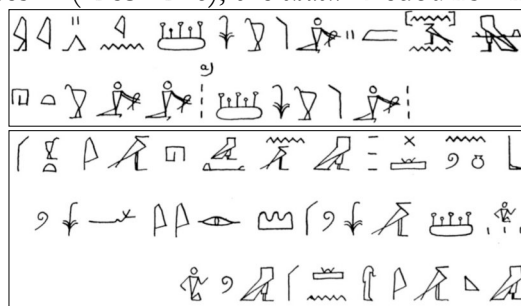


In the temple of Amun (at Soleb) a column, to the north of an Eastern portal (thus pointing towards Canaan), contains a short list of four names¹²¹ (opposite figure). This abnormally short list is composed of at least three unknown toponyms out of four (from left to right):



- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <i>t3 Š3-sw-w s3 m-'ti-i</i> | <i>Land of Bedouins after Maati [Byblian Maat ?]</i> |
| <i>t3 Š3-sw-w y-h-w3 w</i> | <i>Land of Bedouins those of Yebua [Judean Yehowah]</i> |
| <i>t3 Š3-sw t-w-r-j b-l</i> | <i>Land of Bedouins showing respect to Bel [Babylonian Baal]</i> |
| <i>b3-i-ti h '[n-t]</i> | <i>Bait house of Anat [Syrian Anat]</i> |

Beth-Anat could be read as a toponym (Joshua 19:38), but this list of names would be better explained as theonyms instead of toponyms, especially because those four gods were the most important of Canaan. From Ramses II (1283-1216), the *shasu* "Bedouins" in Canaan are distinguished from one another. For example, at the Battle of Kadesh (c. 1277 BCE), a text reads: *Came 2 Shasu from the tribes of Shasu;* (pap. Anastasi): *He takes what is left and joined the (ranks of) wretched. He mingles with the tribes of Shasu land and disguises himself as those Asiatics (aamu) (I, 23,7-8). We ended allowing to tribes of Shasu from Seir (Edom) to pass the fortress (VI, 54-56).*



¹²¹ M. SCHIFF GIORGINI – Soleb V Le temple bas-reliefs et inscriptions
1998 Ed. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale pl. 221.

Shasu regularly appear (not all but most of them) with beards, hairstyles and clothes are substantially identical to those worn by the Hyksos represented on a wall at Beni-Hassan. This hairstyle with a headband encircling the head was a characteristic attribute, in addition, this form seems to have been typical of ancient times. Egyptian art represented thoroughly variations in hairstyles Shasu, it was not for the representatives of other nations. Some features are identical to the biblical descriptions. In addition to their characteristic hair, a detail deserves special note: these prisoners and Shasu soldiers are often clothed in fringes decorated with tassels. According to the biblical text, Moses commanded the Israelites, after they arrived in Palestine to the frayed edges parts of their clothing and tassels at the four corners of these garments (Numbers 15:38-40; Deuteronomy 22:12). This coincidence reinforces the identification of additional Shasu (former Hyksos) with the Israelites of the Bible¹²².



The conquest of Canaan by the Hebrews is dated 1493 BCE in the Bible (see Dating the Biblical Chronology) and archaeology¹²³ confirms the destruction of several big cities in Palestine during the Late Bronze Age IA (1550-1470 BCE), but archaeologists refuse to make a link with the biblical account as P. Grandet explains¹²⁴: *Archaeology seems to reveal a wave of destruction and abandonment of most urban centers in Canaan during the transition from the final phase of the Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze, is to count off, between the beginning of the New Kingdom and the end of the XVIIIth Dynasty (1550-1292). Unfortunately, in the absence of written documentation, the reasons for such a phenomenon, its exact nature, its geographical expansion and to its specific date, remain a matter of debate. Some archaeologists date the destruction of the period immediately following the expulsion of the Hyksos, but the silence of texts and the relative indifference of Egypt towards Asia at this time is not in favor of this theory.* However, the presence of Hapiru¹²⁵ (Hebrews) in Canaan is mentioned¹²⁶ by King Idrimi during his stay¹²⁷ with them (1487-1480?). Egyptians performed several campaigns in Syria-Palestine, soon after 1500 BCE, in fact simple police operations against Canaanite cities of the region (mainly in the Mitanni and not in Lower Retenu, the Hebrews area) to remind them their state of vassalage. If the Egyptian frescoes, in the 15th century BCE, portrayed the Syrians under the features of a vassal people¹²⁸, they simply disparage the "vile" Shasu without explaining their exact status in the region. The Amarna letters show that during the 14th century there were many disturbances in Palestine. This confused situation would explain why Egyptian raids in Palestine are not mentioned in the biblical text, while many cities were back Canaanite or Amorite after the death of Joshua (Judges 1:10-36). Besides, the description of Apiru by

¹²² W.G. DEVER - Aux origines d'Israël. Quand la Bible dit vrai
Paris 2003 Éd. Bayard p. 167

A. F. RAINEY - Israel in Merneptah's Inscription and Reliefs
in: *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001) pp. 57-75

D.B. REDFORD - The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition
in: *Orientalia* 39 (1970) pp. 1-51.

¹²³ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 224-242.

¹²⁴ P. GRANDET - Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 112-114.

¹²⁵ The word is written SA.GAZ and means "wanderer".

¹²⁶ E.L. GREENSTEIN, D. MARCUS - The Akkadian Inscription of Idrimi
in: *Journal of the Association of Near-Eastern Studies* 8 (1976) pp. 59-96.

¹²⁷ The fatal incident that forced Idrimi to leave Aleppo is the attack of his city (in 1500 BCE) by Mursili I, a king of Hatti.

¹²⁸ J. B. PRITCHARD - The Ancient Near East in Pictures
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 15-17.

Canaanite kings in the Amarna letters¹²⁹, is similar to Shasu by Egyptian kings. The area occupied by the Israelites in Palestine hardly concerned the Mediterranean coast, as the south was occupied by the Philistines and the north by the Phoenicians. The Pharaohs led some campaigns in Asia, they mainly concerned Mitanni or the north of Canaan, but never the south of Palestine. In addition, when they entered the area of Israel (north of Palestine), it was only in periods when this area was under foreign domination.

According to the reports from some Canaanite mayors (c. 1350 BCE), the Apiru were becoming a threat to Egypt: *The 'Apiru have taken the entire country (...) if the king, my lord, does [not give beeds] to the words of his servant, while Gubla [Byblos] will joined to him, and all the lands of the king, as far as Egypt, will be joined to the 'Apiru* (EA 83, 88). It seems however that the messages of this vassal king in the north of Canaan showed more posturing than real war, so since he also wrote: *what am I, I who live among 'Apiru, to do? (...) All lands are at war against me* (EA 130). What complicates an accurate identification is the multiplicity of ethnic groups in the same place: *the son of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Yebusites* (Judges 3:5). The city of Jerusalem remaining in the hands of Yebusites (Joshua 15:63). The name Yebus (Judges 19:10) means "trample". Mari texts (around 1800 BCE) experiencing Amorite anthroponym Yabusi'um. A Amorite clan "those of Yabusi" would therefore have been settled in Jerusalem¹³⁰. Campaigns of Pharaohs have always avoided the area of the Shasu which extended into the western plains of Jericho and corresponded to the area indicated by the text of Joshua 4:13. The area of Apiru was smaller than the entire Retenu, however Egyptian domination in Northern Palestine was episodic and may be more theoretical than real¹³¹.

Although Shasu are often mentioned during the reign of Ramses II (1283-1216) they no longer appear in the conventional list of 9 hereditary enemies of Egypt¹³² as can be seen on the temple at Abydos (opposite figure, from left to right): 1) *Tḥmw* Tehenu (Libya); 2) *N-b-r-n* Naharin (Mitanni); 3) *Sn-g-r* Shinar;



4) *H-t* Hatti; 5) *K-f-ti-w* Keftiu (Philistia); 6) *'I-s-y* Asy (Cyprus?); 7) *Š3t* Shat (Sinai?); 8) *'I-s-mw* Assur; 9) *Pd-t-jj šw-w* Bowmen of Shu[tu] (Moab?).

To sum up: most Bedouins (*Shasu*) in Canaan during the period 1500-1200 BCE consisted mainly of wandering shepherds living in Palestine (*upper Retenu*) and worshipped their "Lord" (*Baal/Seth*), for most of them, called Yehua in the temple of Soleb.

Only a rigorous timeline allows setting unquestionably the equivalence between those Bedouins (*Shasu*) and the Hebrews of the Bible. To establish an absolute chronology, the dating obtained from synchronisms dated by astronomy must be used. Thus, both Babylonian and Egyptian chronologies serve as a reference to calibrate all other chronologies (see Dating the Fall of Ur and Babylon). Similarly, the Biblical chronology must be established on the same principle, independently of the others chronologies. The highlighted areas in blue light (hereafter) are regarding to characters who are mentioned in the Bible. The transition period between the Hyksos and the Shasu involved Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa and Apopi, who was Moses (see Dating the War of the Hyksos).

¹²⁹ W.L. MORAN – The Amarna Letters
London 1992 nEd. The Johns Hopkins University Press pp. 153, 160.

¹³⁰ E. LIPINSKI Itineraria Phoenicia
in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 127 (2004) Peeters p. 502).

¹³¹ J.C. GOYON - De l'Afrique à l'Orient (1800-330 avant notre ère)
Paris 2005 Éd. Ellipses pp. 73-75,101-105.

¹³² For example, Keftiu "those of Crete" was a colony from Crete (Dt 2:23, Jr 47:4, Am 9:7), but it disappeared after the destruction of the palace of Knossos around. 1370 BCE and became "Philistia land" afterward. Salmanazar I destroyed Mitanni in 1264 BCE.

KING OF ASSYRIA	reign	KING OF BABYLON	reign	KING OF EGYPT	reign
Šamsî-Adad II	1553-1547	Ammiṣaduqa	1551 -	Antef VII	1555-1545
Išme-Dagan II	1547 -			Antef VIII	1545-1545
	-1531		-1530	Senakhtenre	1545-1544
Šamsî-Adad III	1531-1516	Samsuditana	1530 -	Sequenre Taa	1544-1533
Aššur-nêrârî I	1516-1491		-1499	Kamose	1533-1530
Puzur-Aššur III	1491 -	Agum II	<i>1503-1487</i>	Ahmose	1530-1505
	-1467	Burna-Buriaš I	<i>1487-1471</i>	Amenhotep I	1505-1484
Enlil-nâsir I	1467 -	Kaštiliaš III	<i>1471 -</i>	Thutmose I	1484-1472
	-1455		<i>-1455</i>	Thutmose II	1472-1469
Nûr-ili	1455-1443	Ulam-Buriaš	<i>1455 -</i>	[Hatshepsut]	[1469-1450]
Aššur-šadûni	1443-1443		<i>-1439</i>	Thutmose III	1469-1418
Aššur-rabi I	1443-1433	Agum III	<i>1439 -</i>		
Aššur-nâdin-aḥḫe I	1433-1424		<i>-1423</i>		
Enlil-našir II	1424-1418	Kadašman-Harbe I	<i>1423 -</i>	Amenhotep II	1420-1392
Aššur-nêrârî II	1418-1411		<i>-1407</i>		
Aššur-bêl-nišešu	1411-1403	Kara-indaš	<i>1407 -</i>		
Aššur-rê'im-nišešu	1403-1395		<i>-1391</i>		
Aššur-nâdin-aḥḫe II	1395-1385	Kurigalzu I	<i>1391 -</i>	Thutmose IV	1392-1383
Erîba-Adad I	1385 -		<i>-1375</i>	Amenhotep III	1383 -
	-1358	Kadašman-Enlil I	1375-1360		-1345
Aššur-uballiṭ I	1358 -	Burna-Buriaš II	1360 -	Akhenaton	1356-1340
			-1333	Semenkhkare	1340-1338
		Kara-ḫardaš	1333	-Ankhkheperure	1338-1336
		Nazi-Bugaš	1333	Toutankhamon	1336 -
	-1323	Kurigalzu II	1333 -		-1327
Enlil-nêrârî	1323-1313		-1308	Aḫ	1327-1323
Arik-dên-ili	1313-1302	Nazi-Maruttas	1308 -	Horemheb	1323-1309
Adad-nêrârî I	1302 -		-1282		1309-1295
	-1271			Ramses I	1295-1294
Salmanazar I	1271 -	Kadašman-Turgu	1282-1264	Sethy I	1294-1283
		Kadašman-Enlil II	1264-1255	Ramses II	1283 -
	-1242	Kudur-Enlil	1255-1246		
Tukultî-Ninurta I	1242 -	Šagarakti-šuriaš	1246-1233		
		Kaštiliašu IV	1233-1225		
		Enlil-nâdin-šumi	1225-1224		
		Kadašman-Harbe II	1224-1223		
		Adad-šuma-iddina	1223-1217		-1216
	-1206	Adad-šuma-ušur	1217 -	Merenptah	1216-1207
Aššur-nâdin-apli	1206-1202			Sethy II	1207-1202
Aššur-nêrârî III	1202-1196			Siptah	1202-1196
Enlil-kudurri-ušur	1196 -			-Tausert	1196-1194
	-1191			Sethnakht	1196-1192
Ninurta-apil-Ekur	1191 -		-1187	Ramses III	1192 -
	-1179	Meli-Šipak	1187-1172		-1161
Aššur-dân I	1179 -	Marduk-apla-iddina	1172-1159	Ramses IV	1161 -
		Zababa-šuma-iddina	1159-1158		-1155
		Enlil-nâdin-ahi	1158-1155		
		Marduk-kabit-aḥḫešu	1155 -	Ramses V	1154-1151
			-1141	Ramses VI	1151-1144
	-1133	Itti-Marduk-balaṭu	1141 -	Ramses VII	1144-1137
Ninurta-tukultî-Aššur	1133			Ramses VIII	1137
Mutakkil-Nusku	1133		-1133	Ramses IX	1137 -
Aššur-rêš-iši I	1133 -	Ninurta-nâdin-šumi	1133-1127		-1119
	-1115	Nabuchodonosor I	1127-1105	Ramses X	1119-1116

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

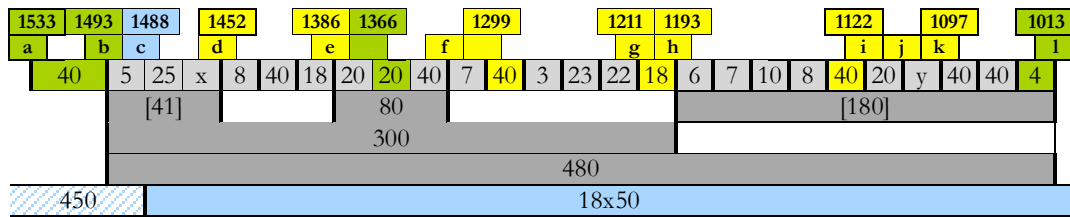
KING OF HATTI	reign	KING OF UGARIT	reign	KING OF MITANNI	reign
Labarna	1550-1530	Ibirânu II	1545-1530		
Ḫattušili I	1530-1510	Ammurapi I	1530-1515		
Muršili I	1510-1500	Niqmepa III	1515-1500		
Ḫantili I	1500-1495	Ibirânu III	1500 -	Kirta	1500 -
Zidanta I	1495				
Ammuna	1495-1485		-1485		-1485
Ḫuzziya II	1485	Niqmepa IV	1485 -	Šutarna I	1485 -
Telipinu	1485-1480				-1480
Alluwamna	1480-1475			Barattarna I	1480 -
Ḫantili II	1475-1470				
Ṭaḫurwaili I	1470		-1470		
Zidanza (II)	1470-1465	Ibirânu IV	1470 -		
Ḫuzziya II	1465-1460				
Muwatalli I	1460-1455		-1450		-1455
Tuṭḫaliya I	1455-1435	Niqmaddu I	1450-1430	Šauštatar I	1455-1435
Ḫattušili II	1435-1425	Yaḡaru	1430-1415	Paršatatar	1435-1425
Tuṭḫaliya II	1425-1395	Ibirânu V	1415-1395	Šauštatar II	1425-1395
Arnuwanda I	1395 -	Niqmaddu II	1395-1380	Barattarna II	1395-1390
	-1370	Niqmepa V	1380 -	Artatama I	1390-1373
Tuṭḫaliya III	1370 -		-1360	Šutarna II	1373-1355
	-1353	Ammištamru II	1360 -	Artašumara	1355-1353
Šuppiluliuma I	1353 -		-1347	Tušratta	1353 -
		Niqmaddu III	1347 -		-1339
	-1322			Artatama II	1339-1325
Arnuwanda II	1322		-1315	Šutarna III	1339-1325
Muršili II	1322-1295	Arḫalbu	1315-1310	Šattiwaza	1325 -
Muwatalli II	1295 -	Niqmepa VI	1310 -		-1300
	-1275			Šattuara I	1300-1285
Urhi-Tešub	1275-1268		-1260	Wašašatta	1285-1275
				Šattuara II	1275-1265
Ḫattušili III	1268-1241	Ammištamru III	1260-1230		
Tuṭḫaliya IV	1241 -	Ibirânu VI	1230-1220		
	-1209	Niqmaddu IV	1220-1210		
Arnuwanda III	1209-1207	Ammurapi II	1210 -		
Šuppiluliyama II	1207-1185		-1185		

KING OF CARKEMISH	reign	KING OF AMURRU	reign	KING OF HAZOR	reign
(HITTITE)		?		Ibni-Addu	1690-1670
?		?		<i>Layer XVI</i>	1600-1500
?		?		<i>Layer XV</i>	1500 -
?		?		Jabin I	1510-1490
?		?			-1400
?		?		<i>Layer XIV</i>	1400 -
?		Abdi-Aširta	1370-1347	Jabin II (EA 227)	1370-1345
?		Aziru	1347 -	[Abdi-Tirši]	1345-1325
Šarri-Kušuh	1325 -		-1314	[?]	1325 -
(Piyassili)	-1310	DU-Tešub	1314-1312		
Šaḫunuruwa	1310 -	Duppi-Tešub	1312-1280		-1300
	-1260	Bentešina	1280-1275	<i>Layer XIII</i>	1300 -
		Šapili	1275-1264		
Ini-Tešub I	1260 -	Bentešina	1264-1230		
	-1220	Šaušgamuwa	1230 -		
Talmi-Tešub	1220-1190		-1200?		
Kuzi-Tešub	1190 -	Maḫḫaza	1200-1185?		-1200
	-1150			-	1200-1150
Ini-Tešub II	1150-1115			<i>Layer XII</i>	1150 -
Tudhaliya	1115-1080			<i>Layer XI</i>	-1000

Biblical chronology (the sub-total of durations are highlighted in green):

N°	HEBREW			reference	ISRAELITE	Reign		reference
0	Moses (<i>Exodus</i>)	1533-1493	40	Ex 16:35				
1	Joshua	1493-1463	30	Jo 14:10;24:29				
2	Without judge	1463-1452	[11]	Jo 24:31	total N° 1-2	1493-1452	≈40	Nb 32:13
3	Cushan-rishat.	1452-1444	8	Jg 3:8				
4	Othniel	1444-1404	40	Jg 3:11				
5	Eglon	1404-1386	18	Jg 3:14				
6	Ehud	1386-1306	80	Jg 3:30				
7	Madian	1306-1299	7	Jg 6:1				
8	Gedeon	1299-1259	40	Jg 8:28				
9	Abimelek	1259-1256	3	Jg 9:22				
10	Tola	1256-1233	23	Jg 10:2				
11	Jair	1233-1211	22	Jg 10:3				
12	Anarchy	1211-1193	18	Jg 10:8	total N° 1-12	1493-1193	300	Jg 11:26,30
13	Jephthe	1193-1187	6	Jg 12:7				
14	Ibzan	1187-1180	7	Jg 12:9				
15	Elon	1180-1170	10	Jg 12:11				
16	Abdon	1170-1162	8	Jg 12:14				
17	[Eli] Philistines	1162-1122	40	1S 4:18				
18	Samson	1122-1102	20	Jg 16:31				
19	Samuel's sons	1102-1097	[5]	1S 8:1-3				
20	Saul	1097-1057	40	Ac 13:21				
21	David	1057-1017	40	1K 2:11				
22	Solomon (y. 4)	1017-1013	4	1K 6:1	total N° 1-22	1493-1013	480	1K 6:1
23	Solomon	1017 - 977	40	1K 11:42				
24	Rehoboam	977-960	17	1K 14:21	Jeroboam I	10/977 - -05/955	22	1K 14:20,21
25	Abiyam	960-957	3	1K 15:2				
26	Asa	957 - -916	41	1K 15:10	Nadab Baasha Elah Zimri Omri/ [Tibni]	06/955-05/954 06/954-04/931 05/931-04/930 05/930 06/930-05/919/ [06/930-01/925]	2 24 2 7 d. 12 6	1K 15:10,25 1K 15:28,33 1K 16:8 1K 16:10-16 1K 16:21-23
27	Jehoshaphat	916 - -891	25	1K 22:42	Ahab Ahaziah	06/919-01/898 02/898-01/897	22 2	1K 16:29 1K 22:51
28	Jehoram (J.)	[893-891] 893 - -885	[2] 8	2K 8:17	Jehoram (A.) [Ahaziah] Ahaziah	02/897-09/886 [07/887-09/886] 10/886-09/885	12 1 1	2K 3:1 2K 9:29 2K 9:24,27
29	[Athaliah]	885-879	6	2K 11:4	Jehu	10/885-03/856	28	2K 10:36
30	Joash	879 - -839	40	2K 12:1-2	Jehoahaz Jehoash	04/856-09/839 [01/841-09/839]	17 2	2K 10:35; 13:1 2K 13:10
31	Amasiah	839 - -810	29	2K 14:2		09/839-01/823	16	2K 13:10
32	Uzziah [Azariah]	810 - [796 - -758	52	2K 15:2	Jeroboam II [Zechariah] Zechariah Shallum Menahem Peqayah	01/823-05/782 [06/782-02/771] 03/771-08/771 09/771 10/771-03/760 04/760-03/758	41 [11] 6 m. 1 m. 10 2	2K 14:23 2K 14:29 2K 15:8 2K 15:13 2K 15:17 2K 15:23
33	Jotham	758-742	16	2K 15:33	Peqah	04/758-05/738	20	2K 15:27
34	Ahaz	742-726	16	2K 16:2	[Hoshea]	[06/738-01/729]	9	2K 15:27-30
35	Hezekiah	726-697	29	2K. 18:2	Hoshea	02/729-09/720	9	2K 17:1,3
36	Manasseh	697-642	55	2K 21:1				
37	Amon	642-640	2	2K 21:19				
38	Josias	640-609	31	2K 22:1				
39	Jehoiaqim	609-598	11	2Ch 36:5				
40	Zedekiah	598-587	11	2Ch 36:11	total N° 24-40	977-587	390	Ezk 4:5-6

PERIOD OF THE JUDGES (1493-1097 BCE)



- a) Exodus from Egypt and start of 40-year wandering in the wilderness of Sinai before entering Canaan (Exodus 16:35).
- b) Israel comes out of the Sinai and enters Canaan; beginning of a 300-year period which will end with Jephthah's vow (Judges 11:26,30). Caleb enters Canaan when he is 80 years old and the country is pacified when he is 85 years old (Joshua 14:7,10).
- c) Joshua, as old as Caleb, died 110 years old (Joshua 13:1; 2Samuel 19:32; Joshua 24:29). The following period [x] is unknown, but it may be reckoned. Indeed, the generation which entered to Canaan with Joshua was to take possession of the country (Judges 2:6-10), now as the preceding generation had lasted 40 years (Numbers 32:13), that makes it possible to suppose that: $[40] = 5 + (25) + x$, with $(25) = 110 - 85$. Calculation gives $x = 11$ year: $300 = 5 + 25 + x + 8 + 40 + 18 + 20 + 20 + 40 + 7 + 40 + 3 + 23 + 22 + 18$. Joshua gave Israelites the pacificated land of Canaan (Joshua 11:23); start of the Jubilee cycle to cancel the debts and free the captives every 50 years (Leviticus 25:8-11). The cycle starts when Canaan is given to Israelites, that is 5 years after they entered the Promised Land (Deuteronomy 6:10,11; Joshua 14:7,10).
- d) Cushan-rishataim, a king of Mitanni, oppressed Israel for 8 years, then Othniel judges for 40 years, then Eglon, a Moabite king, oppressed Israel for 18 years, then Ehud judges the country (Judges 3:8-15).
- e) Ehud judged peacefully 80 years (Judges 3:30) in the south (Judea, then Shamgar judged less than 1 year), which ended by 40 years of peace in the North (Judges 5:31) preceded by 20 years of oppression (Samaria) under Jabin II (Judges 4:3), a Canaanite king of Hazor. After Jabin, Barak judged 40 years in the South (Judges 3:26-31, 4:22-24).
- f) Midian oppressed Israel for 7 years, then Gideon judged for 40 years, then Abimelech was king for 3 years, then Tola judged for 23 years and at the last, Jair judged for 22 years (Judges 6:1, 8:28, 9:22, 10:1-3).
- g) Jair judged Israel for 22 years, but after his death no judge succeeded him and the land was given over to oppression by Philistines, Ammonites, Egyptians, etc. This period of trouble began on 1211 BCE and got Israel in great distress for 18 years (Judges 10:3-13).
- h) Jephthah judged Israel for 6 years, Ibzan for 7 years, Elon for 10 years, Abdon for 8 years. Then follows a 40-year period of oppression by the Philistines (Judges 12:7-13:1).
- i) Samson, a judge for 20 years, puts an end to oppression by the Philistines (Judges 13:5; 16:31). The ark of the covenant captured by the Philistines is given back to Israelites 7 months later. It is moved to Kiriath-jearim where it will stay for 20 years (1Samuel 6:1; 7:2). This 20-year period corresponds to the judicature of Samson which was characterized by peace (1Samuel 7:13-15). During Saul's reign the arch is located in Nob (1Samuel 21:1, 22:19), a town near Qiriath-jearim north of Jerusalem (1Samuel 14:16-18). After 40 years of Saul's reign (1097-1057), David decided a few years after the beginning of his reign to bring it back from Qiriath-jearim to Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 13:5).
- j) Undetermined period (y) between the temporary end of idols use and Samuel defeating the Philistines. This period takes place before Saul's reign (1Samuel 7:4,13; 9:15-16). The period of 176 years from Jephthah to Solomon may be calculated by two ways: $176 = 480 - 300 - 4$ or $176 = 6 + 7 + 10 + 8 + 40 + 20 + (5) + 40 + 40$, thus: $y = 5$.

- k) Saul rules for 40 years (Acts 13:21), then David for 40 years (2Samuel 5:4). The length of the reign, which had to appear in 1Samuel 13:1, can be deduced from the biography of Ishbosheth, a son of Saul, who was born at the beginning of his father's reign (1Chronique 8:33), because he was 40 years at Saul's death (2Samuel 2:10). Josephus hesitated between 20 and 40 years (Jewish Antiquities VI:378, X:143) and also in the sum of reigns (Jewish Antiquities VIII:61, XX:230).
- l) Solomon rules for 40 years. A 480-year period that begins at the Exodus from Egypt terminates in his 4th year of reign (1Kings 6:1; 11:42).

The period of the Judges has few conflicts and therefore little verifiable events by archeology, to only one exception (in 1493 BCE) when the war led to destructions and burned cities, which can be dated by Carbon 14:

- In 1493 BCE when the conquest of Canaan began, the Israelites destroyed three big cities: Jericho (Joshua 6:1,24), and in addition burned with fire Ai (Joshua 8:18-19) and Hazor "the head of all these kingdoms" (Joshua 11:11-13).
- In 1452 BCE Cushan-rishataim, king of Mitanni, came in Israel and governed it 8 years.
- In 1366 BCE Jabin II, a Canaanite king of Hazor, began ruling Israel (northern part)¹³³ for 20 years through his general of armies Sisera who was shot during his war against the Hebrews, just before Jabin II who died a little later (in 1346 BCE).
- In 1294 BCE Gideon allegedly killed 120,000 Orientals near Beth-Shean (Judges 8:10). At that time the Orientals for the Israelites were mostly Syrians (Genesis 25:6,20).
- In 1211 BCE serious disorders appeared in Israel after the death of Judge Jair, who was without a successor for 18 years (Judges 10:3-13).

According to current archeology¹³⁴ (2006 CE), cities of Jericho, Ai and Hazor already existed at the time of Abraham (c. 2000 BCE). The excavations at Tell es-Sultan (identified with Jericho) showed that the fortifications of this big city were destroyed violently around 1550 BCE according to the dating from ceramics. The city was abandoned afterward and was poorly reoccupied during the 14th century BCE before disappearing completely until the 9th century BCE when some insignificant remains appear again. The excavations near Bet-Aven at Khirbet et-Tell (identified with Ai) showed that the city had been destroyed at in the Bronze Age III (c. 2000 BCE) and remained abandoned until the early Iron I. Around that date (c. 1200 BCE), a small town was rebuilt which was partially destroyed again at an indefinite time. The excavations at Tell el-Waqas (identified with Hazor) showed that the fortifications of this big city (it was connected to a wall with casemates, the oldest discovered in Palestine) were destroyed by a violent fire in the Middle Bronze IIC (end of level XVI dated c. 1550 BCE). A new city-state was built¹³⁵ in the Late Bronze I (15th century BCE) which was destroyed by fire at the end of level XIV (dated c. 1300 BCE). The city was destroyed again by a foreign invasion (presumably the Sea Peoples) at the end of level XIII dated approximately around 1200 BCE. The city was finally destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser III (level VA dated 732 BCE). The archeological dating of all those destructions made consensus¹³⁶. Based on these archaeological findings, most biblical scholars conclude that the conquest of Canaan had to take place around 1200 BCE and the details from the biblical text are unreliable or even erroneous¹³⁷.

¹³³ The southern part of Israel was ruled in peace by Judge Ehud during 80 years (Judges 3:30), then in 1306 BCE by Shamgar but less than 1 year (Jewish War V:197). The name Shamgar (Ši-ma-qa-ri) appears in several Nuzi texts (ca 14th century BCE).

¹³⁴ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

¹³⁵ K. JOSEPHSON HESSE – Contacts and Trade at Late Bronze Age Hazor Umea 2008, Print & Media (Doctoral Dissertation in Archaeology) pp. 221-227.

¹³⁶ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 196, 242, 301, 372-373.

¹³⁷ R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 560-582, 602-605.

The main reason that leads biblical scholars to the surprising conclusion about the biblical text comes from the supposed absence of the city of Ai in the 16th century BCE. This conclusion unanimously accepted by archaeologists is however triply preposterous:

1. If one chooses the date of 1200 BCE instead of 1550 BCE for the conquest of Canaan because the city of Ai did not exist at the 16th century BCE, then one should choose the date of 1550 BCE, instead of 1200 BCE, because the city of Jericho did not exist in the 13th century BCE.
2. The city of Ai was rebuilt around 1200 BCE and not completely destroyed as stated in the biblical text.
3. If one considers the biblical text as trusted to describe the conquest of Canaan, one must also accept its date which is around 1500 BCE, three centuries before.

Considering all the archaeological findings for the three cities, their destruction around 1550 BCE is the most logical date. Moreover some archeologists¹³⁸ find the identification with Khirbet et-Tell unacceptable on the basis of the city's size (Joshua 7:3) and the fact that there is no broad valley to the North of Khirbet et-Tell (Joshua 8:11). The city was probably abandoned around 2000 BCE and rebuilt nearby the ruins of the ancient site (common phenomenon in Palestine) and was called Ai "ruins". This "new city" was finally destroyed around 1550 BCE. It is noteworthy that Jebel et-Tawil site, 3 km at South West of et-Tell, unearthed a city dated Middle Bronze Age II¹³⁹ (2100-1550 BCE). Anyway, further archaeological work about Ai is clearly necessary before the problem can be solved without dispute. The archaeological excavations of the cities of Jericho and Hazor gave results much reliable and therefore less controversial. As recalled Finkelstein, before identifying the factor of a destruction, one must first determine accurately the date of this destruction, but archaeologists rarely agree between them. For example, Finkelstein himself regularly shows that the earlier dating of his predecessors were wrong¹⁴⁰:

DE VAUX		CHAMBON		HERZOG, SINGER-AVITZ		FINKELSTEIN	
Level	Date	Period	Date	Period	Date	Period	Date
4 Late Bronze	1200-1100	VIIa	1150-1050	Early Iron IIA	950-900	Late Iron I/ Early Iron IIA	930-870
3 Iron I	1100-1000	VIIb	1050-950	Late Iron IIA	900-830	Late Iron IIA	870-830

As can be seen in the table above, each archaeologist has his own way of naming and dating stratigraphic layers. Thus, the oldest layers are thus rejuvenated about 200 years. This raises two questions: When this process of rejuvenation will cease and the latest results are they necessarily the most reliable? Contrary to what say learnedly Finkelstein, the archaeological datings from ceramics for ancient periods (prior to 700 BCE) are still very inaccurate. Even the few archaeological dates considered as pivotal dates are disputed, for example one can read: *There are many reasons to question the idea that the destruction of Hazor V in 732 BC provides a firm "anchor" in the present chronological debates. The dating of the end of Stratum V to the Assyrian conquest is merely an assertion which has become a given, used to reconstruct the dates of preceding and following layers but never properly argued out in its own right —or, for that matter, critically analysed. It has also given rise to numerous anomalies in the dating of Hazor's Iron IIA-IIB strata, concerning independently dated imports (from Cyprus, Phoenicia and Mesopotamia), which have previously been treated on an unsatisfactory ad hoc basis. While the Tel Aviv school has now begun to address the problem of Iron IIA chronology originally raised by Kenyon et al. from their excavations at Samaria, similar uncertainties in dating extend well into the succeeding Iron IIB and IIC periods. Advocates of the*

¹³⁸ J. SIMONS in: *American Journal of Archeology* 51:3 (July-September 1947) p. 311.

¹³⁹ J.J. BIMSON, D. LIVINGSTON – Redating the Exodus
in: *Biblical Archaeological Review* 13:5 (September-October 1987) pp. 40-53, 66-68.

¹⁴⁰ I. FINKELSTEIN - La royaume biblique oublié
Paris 2013 Éd. Odile Jacob pp. 44-45, 64-68, 113, 122-123, 233-243.

Tel Aviv version of a 'Low Chronology' are working within an unnecessary straitjacket, by adhering to Yadin's dating of Hazor VII-V. This has led them, while lowering Iron IIA largely into the ninth century, to conclude that this important phase should be shortened from 200 to 125 years. If we abandon the "anchor" of 732 BC for the end of Hazor V, and lower Hazor VII into the mid-eighth century, then Iron IIA might be allowed a slightly longer duration. The related problem, of "stratigraphic congestion" between strata X-V is also relieved, and a major obstacle is removed to lowering Iron IIA from the 10th to the 9th century BC¹⁴¹. Archaeological dating is therefore largely conjectural. The carbon-14 dating is much more accurate (+/- 25 years) if one can be sure that debris are actually measured at the time of destruction, which is not often the case for two reasons: the materials buildings of the past were often reused and dating of wood indicates only when the tree was felled and not when being burned (often 50 years later).

DATING THE FALL OF JERICHO AND HAZOR (1493 BCE)

The destruction of Jericho is well documented in the biblical narrative, as it is the first Canaanite city conquered by Joshua after entering the land: *The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the 14th day of the month, at evening, in the plain of Jericho. On the very next day after the Passover, they ate what the land produced, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn. The manna stopped the day after they had eaten the produce of the land. The Israelites from that year onwards [1493 BCE] ate the produce of Canaan and had no more manna (...)* The people raised the war cry, the trumpets sounded. When the people heard the sound of the trumpet, they raised a mighty war cry and the wall collapsed then and there. At once the people stormed the city, each man going straight forward; and they captured the city. They burned the city and everything inside it, except the silver, the gold and the things of bronze and iron; these they put into the treasury of Yahweh's house (Joshua 5:11-6:24). According to the biblical text, Jericho, also called "City of Palms", was reoccupied 18 years (1404-1386) by Eglon (Judges 3:12-14), a king of Moab. This city has become a small village, mentioned in the time of David (2 Samuel 10:5), was rebuilt at the time of Ahab (1Kings 16:33-34) who reigned (919-898), 500 years after the conquest of Joshua.

The city of Jericho, located in front of Mount Nebo, land of Moab (Deuteronomy 32:49), was identified with Tell es-Sultan. Several points of the biblical narrative have been confirmed by archaeology¹⁴²: 1) The city was strongly fortified and 2) was on a hillock (the people went up into the city). 3) The conquest happened in the early spring, just after harvest, since grain storage jars were full (Joshua 2:6, 3:15, 4:9, and 5:10 show that early spring was the time of Joshua's siege). 4) Because the storage jars were full, there could not have been a long siege before the city fell. 5) There were dwellings built up right against the outer (mudbrick) city wall, such as was the case for Rahab's dwelling. 6) The city wall collapsed to the base of the tell (Joshua 6:20). 7) As established by Kenyon, it was after the walls fell that the city was burned with an intense conflagration. 8) Following the destruction by fire, the main part of the city remained uninhabited for a number of decades. 9) During the time when the city was basically uninhabited, there was found nevertheless an isolated palace-like structure that Garstang called the "Middle Building," dated to the 14th century BCE. The resident here was well-to-do, as evidenced by a large quantity of imported Cypriot pottery. 10) The Middle Building was only inhabited for a short time. It's description and chronology fit the story of Eglon, king of Moab, who set up operations in the abandoned city of Jericho some decades after the death of Joshua, as recorded in Judges 3:12-30.

¹⁴¹ P. JAMES – The Alleged "Anchor Point" of 732 BC for the Destruction of Hazor V in: *Antiquo Oriente* Vol 6 (2008), pp. 137-175.

¹⁴² B.G. WOOD – Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho? A New Look at the Archaeological Evidence in: *Biblical Archaeology Review* 16:2 (March/April 1990), pp. 44-58.

The main disagreement comes from dating: according to John Garstang, the destruction of Jericho took place around 1400 BCE, but according to Kathleen Kenyon, the city was destroyed around 1550 BCE and was then abandoned. Dating the destruction of Jericho is tricky because the remains of the city are very low and it has been rebuilt at least 7 times. Fortunately the only layer where there was a destruction by fire is dated around 1550 BCE. The discovery of scarab seals in the name of Thutmose III, Hatshepsut and Amenophis III, proves that this city was still inhabited long after this date¹⁴³. In addition, pottery, type "bi-chrome Cypriot", appearing only during the Hyksos period¹⁴⁴ (1600-1450), have also been unearthed in this city.



The Carbon-14 dating¹⁴⁵ gives two dates: 1563 BCE +/- 38 years from a sample of 6 grains or 1597 BCE +/- 91 years from 2 samples¹⁴⁶ of charcoal. These results demonstrate two important points: 1) the accuracy of the Carbon-14 dating is highly dependent on the calibration curve (complex and evolving), 2) dates obtained from charcoal samples are higher than 34 years because the dating from charcoal is that when the wood was cut down and not when it burned (several decades later). Dating from the sample of 6 grains is better because it gives the date of harvest that preceded the fire a while before.

Two elements, unexplainable by archaeology, advocate for biblical narrative: 1) who were the perpetrators of the destruction? 2) Why many jars found at the site were still full of grains (opposite figure)? According to the Bible, the siege was short (7 days), thus grain reserves will not last be initiated. Kenyon believed that the city had been destroyed by the Egyptians at the time of the expulsion of the Hyksos¹⁴⁷ but this contradicts the account of Ahmose, son of Abana, who clearly states not having gone beyond Sharuhén (near Gaza), further, the Egyptians have never been in the area of Jericho. Mazar¹⁴⁸ wrote: *These subdivisions reflects the major historical developments related to the Egyptian history: LB IA is parallel to the period of the Eighteenth Dynasty, between the expulsion of the Hyksos and the conquest of Canaan by Tuthmosis III (...). Indeed, it appears that southern Palestine suffered from of wave of devastation in the sixteenth century*



¹⁴³ J. GARSTANG – The Story of Jericho: Further Light on the Biblical Narrative in: *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature* 58 (1941), pp. 126, 368-372.

¹⁴⁴ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 216-218, 257-261.

¹⁴⁵ H. BRUINS, J. VAN DER PLICHT -Tell-es-Sultan (Jericho): Radiocarbon results of short-lived cereal and multiyear charcoal samples from the end of the Middle Bronze Age in: *Radiocarbon* 37:2 (1995) pp. 213-220.

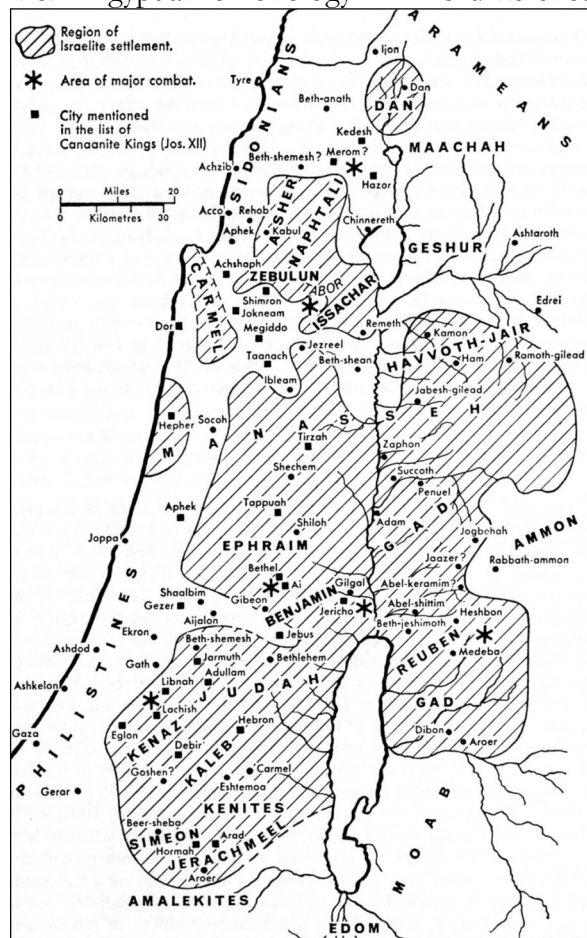
¹⁴⁶ Excavations at Jericho, 1998. Preliminary Report on the Second Season of Excavations and Surveys at Tell es-Sultan, Palestine in: *Quaderni di Gerico* 2 (2000) pp. 206-207, 330, 332.

¹⁴⁷ K.M. KENYON – Palestine in the Middle Bronze Age in: *Cambridge Ancient History* Vol. 2 Part 1 (1973), pp. 92-93.

¹⁴⁸ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 238-241.

B.C.E.; such devastation was probably brought about by the Egyptians in their struggle against the Hyksos, who retreated to this area after their expulsion from Egypt. The only plausible explanation is to identify the Hyksos with the Israelites who, according to the biblical text, burned three cities: Jericho, Ai, and Hazor during their conquest of Canaan (Joshua 6:1,24; 8:19; 11:11-13). Again to explain this destruction, one must imagine wars (not documented) between the small kingdoms of Canaan. This explanation, however, faces to logic, because which kingdom could defeat Hazor, one of the most powerful cities of the time (the Egyptians and Babylonians were absent from this region)? In addition, the walls of this Canaanite city are identical to those excavated at Tell el-Yahudiyeh and at Heliopolis (in the east of the Delta in Egypt), typical of the Hyksos fortifications¹⁴⁹ of this period. All these datings are consistent and confirm indirectly the biblical text.

The archaeological dating of the destruction of Jericho, according to the Carbon 14 (calibrated) is around 1550 BCE. However, these ¹⁴C measures overestimate dates about 50 years, during this period, compared those from Egyptian chronology¹⁵⁰. This difference implies a date, calibrated and corrected, around 1500 BCE, in good agreement with the dating 1493 BCE, according to the Masoretic chronology. Moreover, according to the biblical text, several regions conquered by the Israelites, after their entry into Canaan, varied in space and also in time¹⁵¹. Given the complexity at that time of boundaries in Canaan, of their quick changes, of the presence of many ethnic groups (Philistines, Amalekites, Moabites, Ammonites, Arameans or Syrians, Sidonians or Phoenicians, Israelites or Shasu, etc.) which also varied in time and space, it is impossible to archeology to write the history of this region, solely chronology can enlighten such complex events. The complete destruction of the walled city of Jericho around 1500 BCE involves attributing it to the Hyksos and therefore to the Israelites, in the same way the destruction of the powerful city of Hazor at the same time which was "the head of all these kingdoms" (Joshua 11:11-13).



Prior 1800 BCE, Hazor and Laish are the only two cities of Canaan mentioned in the archives of Mari which attach great importance to Hazor. Geti, king of Hazor, is listed in the Execration Texts, around 1950 BCE, and that of Ibni-Addu, king of Hazor, appears in letters to the kings of Mari around 1700 BCE¹⁵². The city of Hazor has a long history, in

¹⁴⁹ A. MAZAR – Archeology of the Land of the Bible New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 194-202.

¹⁵⁰ H. HAAS, ET AL – Radiocarbon Chronology and the Historical Calendar in Egypt in: Chronologies in the Near East (1987) Ed. O. Aurenche et al pp. 585-606.

¹⁵¹ Y. AHARONI – The Land of the Bible Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 202-214.

¹⁵² J. BRIEND – Israël et les nations in: Supplément au Cahiers Évangile 69 (Cerf, 1989) pp. 14-16.

addition, it has been destroyed several times including twice by fire at the end of layer XVI circa -1550 +/- 60 years and at the end of layer XIII about -1200 +/- 25 years. An important question is to know "who" destroyed this mighty city of Hazor and "when". The biblical solution: Israelites around 1500 BCE, is now denied because most archaeologists and Egyptologists have abandoned the archaeological investigation of Moses and the Exodus, regarding it as "a fruitless pursuit"¹⁵³. In addition, the consensus among biblical scholars today is that there was never any exodus of the proportions described in the Bible, and that the story is best seen as theology. Certain biblical scholars (in the past) supposed that the destruction of Hazor by fire, around 1200 BCE, was caused by the Israelites. This hypothesis is absolutely ludicrous for the following reasons:

- The error in the biblical chronology would be about 300 years (no comment)!
- If the Israelites were those who destroyed Hazor by fire around 1200 BCE they would have left Egypt around 1250 BCE just after the death of Pharaoh in the Red Sea (Psalms 136:15). It is easy to verify that no Pharaoh of this era experienced any trouble in Egypt and died in a violent manner. Thus, both Ramses II (1283-1216) and Merneptah (1216-1207) lived peacefully.
- There was a violent crisis dated around 1200 BCE caused by the Sea Peoples¹⁵⁴ which hit all the eastern Mediterranean and caused the ruin of the great empires of the Bronze Age, in which the Trojan War is the most famous episode.



¹⁵³ C. MEYERS – Exodus

Cambridge 2005 Ed. Cambridge University Press p. 5.

W. DEVER - What Did the Biblical Writers Know, and When Did They Know It?

Grand Rapids 2001 Ed. Eerdmans p. 99

¹⁵⁴ R. MORKOT – Historical Atlas of Ancient Greece

London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 30-31.

Numerous cities were destroyed: Thebes, Lefkandi, Tiryns, Mycenae and Pylos in mainland Greece and Chania in Crete were ransacked and sometimes completely destroyed. Most of these cities and their palaces were burned. In Anatolia, among the most important sites, archaeological levels similarly destroyed are found and which dates from the same period. Hattusa, the Hittite capital, was sacked and burned just like the major cities of Cyprus. On the north coast of Syria, the flourishing city of Ugarit was destroyed and never inhabited thereafter. Mesopotamia was preserved as the wave of devastation did not extend to the east, and it was the Egyptians who alone could stop it. The temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu contains an account of this victory over the Sea Peoples. The identification of these peoples as their reasons for migration are poorly understood¹⁵⁵, however, these events are precisely dated year 8 of Ramesses III in 1185 BCE. This war led by the Sea Peoples had to be spread over less than one year because, according to the inscription of Ramses III, all countries (Hatti, the coast of Cilicia, Carchemish, Cyprus, etc.) were "destroyed all at once" and, according to the text of Homer, the sacking of the city of Priam [Troy], after 10 years of fighting, was followed "in less than 1 month" by the cruise of Achaeans to Egypt and the sacking of its wonderful fields (Odyssey XIV:240-280). This destruction coincides with the fall of the Hittite Empire dated year 2 of Meli-Shipak¹⁵⁶ in 1185 BCE. The great Alexandrian scholar Eratosthenes (276-193) dated the famous Trojan War in 1184 BCE and Manetho¹⁵⁷, while confirming the 7-year reign of Queen Tausert (1202-1194) stated: *Thouôris, (...) at the time when Troy was taken, reigned 7 years*¹⁵⁸. Although we have no historical evidence indicating who destroyed Hazor in 1185 BCE, but the Sea People is the only candidate. On the other hand at that time, the Israelites were among the assaulted and not the aggressors.

It is noteworthy that the destruction of Hazor in 1550 BCE (+/- 60 years), the most powerful Canaanite city of that time, may have been caused only by the Hyksos¹⁵⁹. Most archaeologists reject such a conclusion (one can guess why) and prefer to either ignore it (most common) or to link it to the campaign of Thutmose III in Palestine. The latter hypothesis is ludicrous because of the following reasons:

- Thutmose III came in Palestine only from his 23rd year of reign (c. 1450 BCE), that is 100 years later (at least 50 years) after the destruction of Hazor.
- Thutmose III did not destroy Hazor but rather looted the city¹⁶⁰, he is far more likely to have subjugated Hazor than actually to have destroyed it. In support of this conclusion is the parallel that exists with several other cities that were destroyed or subjugated by Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. Relevant among these cities are Aleppo, Kadesh, and Tunip. Kadesh, which is considered to have been the most powerful city in Syria and was already mentioned as being the focal point of rebellious opposition to Egypt at the outset of the reign of Thutmose III, is the closest of these cities in proximity to Hazor. Not to be deterred, Egypt's greatest imperialistic pharaoh eventually attacked Kadesh and "destroyed" the city. However, Pritchard notes this about the invasion of Kadesh: *The word 'destroy,' used with reference to this town, is not to be taken literally; Thutmose may have*

¹⁵⁵ S. PECZYNSKI – The Sea People and their Migration

New Jersey 2009, Ed. Rutgers University (PhD in History), pp. 62-105.

¹⁵⁶ The last texts from Emar are dated [-]/VI₂/2 and 6/VII/[2] of Meli-Shipak, in October 1185 BCE (Y. COHEN, I. SINGER – A Late Synchronism between Ugarit and Emar in: Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context, Ed. Eisenbrauns 2006, Indiana p. 134).

¹⁵⁷ W.G. WADDELL – Manetho

Massachusetts 1956 Ed. Harvard University Press pp. 101-119.

¹⁵⁸ Tausert actually reigned, from 1195 to 1194, at the beginning of the war, 10 years before the destruction of Troy. According to Thucydides, the Trojan War was the result of an expedition of disparate tribes of pirates (see Odyssey III:71-74), living on islands around Achaia, who were united by King Agamemnon of Mycenae. This expedition against the Trojans was the culmination of 10 years of battle (The Peloponnesian War I:8-12). For example, a battle in Egypt is mentioned in the year 5 of Rameses III.

¹⁵⁹ H. BRUINS, J. VAN DER PLICHT -Tell-es-Sultan (Jericho): Radiocarbon results of short-lived cereal and multiyear charcoal samples from the end of the Middle Bronze Age in: *Radiocarbon* 37:2 (1995) p. 217.

¹⁶⁰ D. PETROVICH –The Dating Of Hazor's Destruction In Joshua 11 By Way Of Biblical, Archaeological, And Epigraphical Evidence in: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51:3 (Sept 2008) pp. 489-512.

done no more than destroy its food supplies. Redford concurs, as he writes: The mountains were crossed and Kadesh attacked directly. Although the terse entry in the daybook reads 'destroying it,' it is clear that the city itself did not fall, and suffered only the laying waste of its orchards and crops.

In conclusion, the destruction of the powerful city of Hazor in 1550 BCE (+/- 60 years) must be assigned to the Israelites¹⁶¹, called Hyksos or Asiatics by the Egyptians.

DATING THE 'APIRU'S WAR AND SISERA'S DEATH (1347 BCE)

The short period 1360-1330 BCE is one of the best documented about Canaan, Palestine and Egypt through the Amarna letters (almost 400 letters), but paradoxically some parts remain controversial¹⁶² because of the following:

- Most protagonists are rarely mentioned by name but almost exclusively by their title (king, mayor) or function (ruler, commissioner).
- The boundaries of some small countries (Amurru, Palestine) have been very volatile.
- Transcription of Egyptian names into Akkadian¹⁶³ is often quite confusing¹⁶⁴.
- It is difficult to distinguish ethnic vs common names, but a link exists between them¹⁶⁵. In Egyptian¹⁶⁶: 'Aperu "crew members/workmen", Šasu "Bedouins", 'A[ʾ]amu "Asiatics"; in Babylonian: 'Apiru "factions"¹⁶⁷, Ḫapiru SA.GAZ "nomads", Ḫabiru "migrants", Ahlamaiu "Arameans"; in Hebrew: 'Ibrim "Hebrews/those of Eber", 'eber means migrant! These terms often refer to people in the same place at the same time.
- Canaanite mayors all accuse each other of treachery to the pharaoh (who are the liars?).
- There were several simultaneous wars: 1) Hatti against Mitanni (ally of Egypt) then against Amurru (former ally of Egypt); 2) Apiru mercenaries (EA 195) around Amurru's area in the North and around Shechem's area in the South against Canaanite kings.

Canaan appears at this time as a sort of protectorate under the power of pharaohs. Each king, wren, or town mayor, must swear allegiance to the pharaoh and take into account the requirements of the latter who secured his power in the land by sending his representatives on the spot accompanied by a police escort of a few hundred archers. These letters reveal a generally peaceful international environment with the exception of two areas of conflict, one in the region around the land of Amurru and another in the area around the town of Shechem.

Nearly one-quarter of the letters are from Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos. The politics of Rib-Hadda's Byblos were dominated by the emergence of a major power in Amurru with 'Abdi-Aširta and the aggression of Šuppiliuma I, King of Hatti. With Sumur captured and Byblos virtually besieged, Amenhotep IV was obliged to summon the ruler of Amurru, Aziru, to court, where he was detained for several months. Subsequently, however, Aziru stepped up the pressure on Byblos and switched his allegiance to the King of Hatti. The politics of Palestine, on the other hand, were dominated by local power-

¹⁶¹ T.M. KENNEDY – The Israelite Conquest: History or Myth? An Archaeological Evaluation of the Israelite Conquest During the Periods of Joshua and the Judges in: Master of Arts report (University of South Africa, 2011) pp. 106-142.

¹⁶² D. KAHN – One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward: The Relations between Amenhotep III and Tushratta, King of Mitanni in: Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature (Brill, 2011) pp. 136-152.

¹⁶³ A. DODSON – Were Nefertiti & Tutankhamen Coregents?

in: KMT a Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt n° 20:3 (2009) p. 48.

¹⁶⁴ For example (Egyptian / Akkadian): Thutmose III (Menkheperre / Manakhepiya); Amenhotep III (Nebmaatre / Ni[ʾ]muariya); Akhenaten (Neferkheperure / Napkhepiya); Tutankhamun (Nebkheperure / Nibkhepiya); Semenkheperure (Ankheperure / [Nip] Khuriya).

The land of Mitanni (Hittite) is called Meteni (Egyptian), Hanigalbat (Assyrian), Aram-Naharaim (Hebrew), Naharina "[between the] rivers [Tigris and Euphrates]" (Babylonian), Neberine (Egyptian), Mesopotamia "between rivers" (Greek). The people of Mitanni are called Hurri.

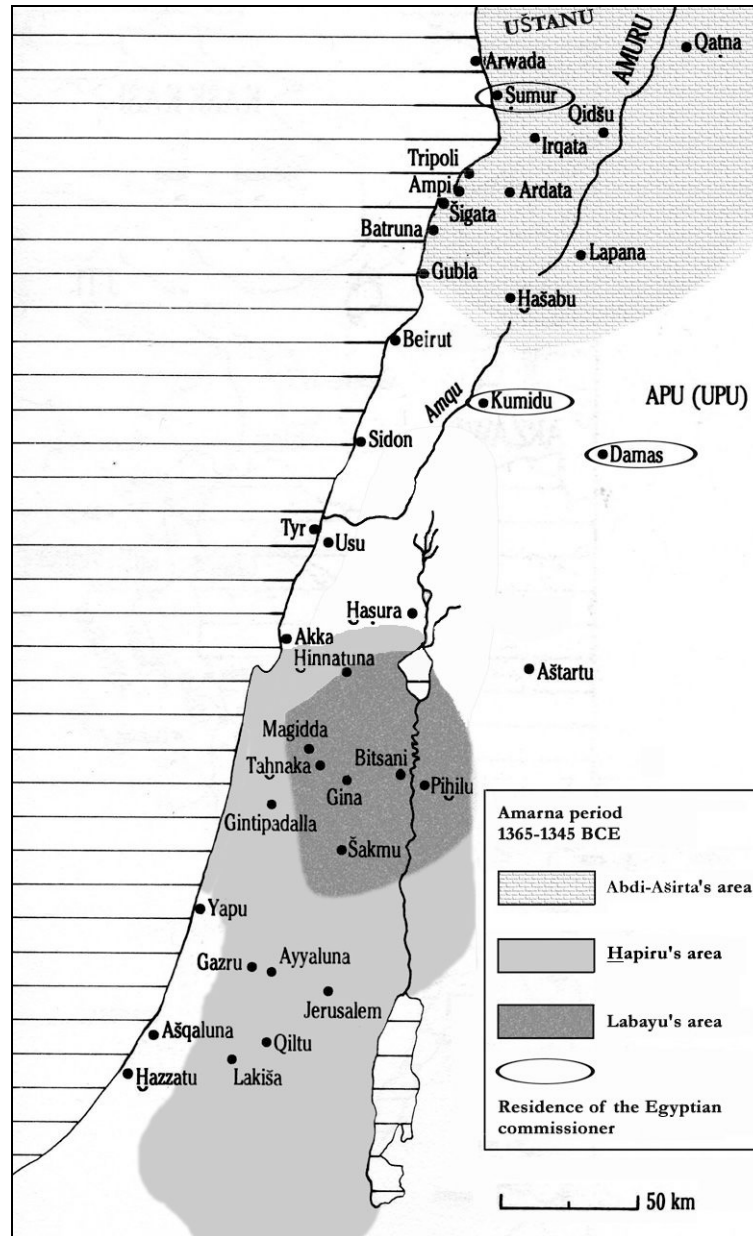
¹⁶⁵ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna

in: LIPO n°13 Paris 1987 Ed. Cerf pp. 569, 604-605.

¹⁶⁶ R.O. FAULKNER – A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian Oxford 2002, Ed. Griffith Institute pp. 38, 42, 261.

¹⁶⁷ In Middle Assyrian apāru/epēru means "put crown on the head", see: A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000) pp. 19, 99. In Amarna letters Apiru are compared to: a runaway dog (EA 67); mercenaries (EA 71); a rebel (EA 288); robbers (EA 318). In Akkadian Ḫapiri/Ḫabbātu¹⁶⁸ SA.GAZ means "nomads/looters", see Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne (Geuthner, 1999) p. 87.

games in which Egypt intervened as little as possible. However, the raiding of Lab'ayu and his sons near Megiddo was one local irritation which grew into a thread to trade. Avoiding direct intervention, Amenholep IV demanded that a group of Palestinian city-states put aside their own differences and co-operate in order to eliminate Lab'ayu (and protecting the trade routes with the minimum of direct intervention). Key areas of conflict¹⁶⁸:



The term 'Apiru (factions) is used with a slightly different meaning to the north and south. For example, Biryawaza, the mayor of Kumidu (in the north), wrote to the Egyptian king: *I am indeed, together with my troops and chariots, together with my brothers [soldiers from Kumidu], my 'Apiru [Canaanite mercenaries from Amurru] and my Suteans [Syrian mercenaries from Mitanni], at the disposition of the archers [Egyptian soldiers], wheresoever the king [of Egypt], my lord, shall order (me to go)* (EA 195). These mercenaries were involved in police operations and not in a war because of the numbers involved¹⁶⁹. Thus Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos wrote: *What is*

¹⁶⁸ B. MANLEY – Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypte
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 80-81.

¹⁶⁹ For example: *Zitana [a Hittite General] has come and there are 90,000 infantrymen that have come with him* (EA 170).

'Abdi-Aširta [king of Amurru], servant and dog, that he takes the land of the king himself? What is his auxiliary forces that it is strong? Through the 'Apiru his auxiliary force is strong! So send me 50 pairs of horses and 200 infantry that I may resist him in Šigata until the coming forth of the archers (EA 71). The 'Apiru of 'Abdi-Aširta (King of Amurru) were factious from Amurru and the 'Apiru of Lab'ayu, the mayor of Shechem, were factious from the area around Shechem: *Message of Biridiya [Mayor of Megiddo] (...) The two sons of Lab'ayu have indeed gave the money to the 'Apiru and to the Suteans in order to wage war against me* (EA 246).

The term Ḫapiru/'Apiru was also used to designate the inhabitants of Palestine¹⁷⁰, a country that was at peace! For example, 'Abdi-Heba, the mayor of Jerusalem, wrote: *What have I done to the king, my lord? They denounce me: (I am slandered) before the king, my lord: 'Abdi-Heba has rebelled against the king, his lord. Seeing that, as far as I am concerned, neither my father nor my mother put me in this place, but the strong arm of the king brought me into my father's house, why should I of all people commit a crime against the king, my lord? As truly as the king, my lord, lives, I say to the commissioner of the king, my lord: Why do you love the 'Apiru but hate the mayors? Accordingly, I am slandered before the king, my lord. Because I say: Lost are the lands of the king, my lord, accordingly I am slandered before the king, my lord. May the king, my lord, know that (though) the king, my lord, stationed a garrison (here) [Now], O king, my lord, [there is n]o garrison, [and so] may the king provide for his land. May the king provide for his land! All the lands of the king, my lord, have deserted. Ili-Milku [mayor of Gezer] has caused the loss of all the land of the king, and so may the king, my lord, provide for his land. For my part, I say: I would go in to the king, my lord, and visit the king, my lord, but the war against me is severe, and so I am not able to go in to the king, my lord. And may it seem good in the sight of the king, [and] may he send a garrison so I may go in and visit the king, my lord. In truth, the king, my lord, lives: whenever the commissioners have come out, I would say (to them): Lost are the lands of the king, but they did not listen to me. Lost are all the mayors; there is not a mayor remaining to the king, my lord. May the king turn his attention to the archers so that archers of the king, my lord, come forth. The king has no lands. (That) 'Apiru [Ili-Milku] has plundered all the lands of the king. If there are archers this year, the lands of the king, my lord, will remain. But if there are no archers, lost are the lands of the king, my lord (EA 286). Consider] the entire affair. [Milkilu and Tagi brou]ght [troop]s into [Keilah] against me. [Consider] the deed that they did [to your servant] (...) May the king know (that) all the lands are [at] peace (with one another), but I am at war. May the king provide for his land. Consider the lands of Gezer, Askelon, and Lachish. They have given them food, oil, and any other requirement. So may the king provide for archers and send the archers against men that commit crimes against the king, my lord. If this year there are archers, then the lands and the mayors will belong to the king, my lord. But if there are no archers, then the king will have neither lands nor mayors. Consider Jerusalem! This neither my father nor my mother gave to me. The strong hand: (arm) [of the king] gave it to me. Consider the deed! This is the deed of Milkilu [ruler of Gezer] and the deed of the sons of Lab'ayu [rulers of Shechem], who have given the land of the king (to) the 'Apiru. Consider, O king, my lord! I am in the right! With regard to the Kašites (Kushites?), may the king make inquiry of the commissioners. Though the house is well fortified, they attempted a very serious crime. They took their tools, and I had to seek shelter by a support for the roof. A[nd so i]f he is going to send [troop]s into [Jerusalem], let them come with [a garrison for] (regular) service. May the king provide for them; [all] of the land might be in dire straits on their account. May the king inquire about the[m. Let there be] much food, much oil, much clothing, until Pauru, the commissioner of the king, comes up to Jerusalem. Gone is Addaya together with the garrison of soldiers [that] the king provided. May the king know (that) Addaya said to me: Behold, he has dismissed me. Do not abandon it, [and] send this [year] a garrison, and send right here the commissioner of the king. I sent [as gift]s to the king, my lord, [x] prisoners, 5000 [... and ...]8 porters for the caravans of the k[ing, my lord], but they have been taken in the countryside of Ajjalon. May the king, my lord, know (that) I am unable to send a caravan to the king, my lord. For your information! As the king has placed his name in Jerusalem forever,*

¹⁷⁰ In addition, several cities bear the same name as Rehob (Joshua 19:28-30), Aphek (Joshua 12:18; 13:4; 19:30; 1Kings 20:26), etc.

he cannot abandon it —the land of Jerusalem. Say to the scribe of the king, my lord: Message of 'Abdi-Heba, your servant. I fall at (your) feet. I am your servant. Present eloquent words to the king, my lord: I am a soldier of the king, I am always yours. And please make the Kašites responsible for the evil deed. I was almost killed by the Kašites in my own house. May the king [make an inquiry] in their regard. [May the kin]g, my lord, [provide] for them (EA 287). It is, therefore, impious what they have done to me. Behold, I am not a mayor; I am a soldier of the king, my lord. Behold, I am a friend of the king and a tribute-bearer of the king. It was neither my father nor my mother, but the strong arm of the king that placed me in the house of [my] father (...) May the king give thought to his land; the land of the king is lost. All of it has attacked me, I am at war as far as the land of Šeru (Seir) and as far as Ginti-kirmil (Gath of Carmel). All the mayors are at peace, but I am at war. I am treated like an 'Apiru, and I do not visit the king, my lord, since I am at war. I am situated like a ship in the midst of the sea. The strong hand (arm) of the king took the land of Naḥrima (Mitanni) and the land of Kasi (Kush), but now the 'Apiru have taken the very cities of the king. Not a single mayor remains to the king, my lord; all are lost. Behold, Turbazu was slain in the city gate of Silu. The king did nothing. Behold, servants who were joined to the 'Apiru smote Zimredda of Lachish, and Yaptih-Hadda was slain in the city gate of Silu. The king did nothing. Why has he not called them to account? May the king provide for his land and may he see to it that archers [come ou]t to his land. If there are no archers this year, all the lands of the king, my lord, are lost. They have not reported to the king that the lands of the king, my lord, are lost and all the mayors lost. If there are no archers this year, may the king send a commissioner to fetch me, me along with my brothers, and then we will die near the king, our lord (EA 288). Milkilu does not break away from the sons of Lab'ayu and from the sons of Arsawa, as they desire the land of the king for themselves. As for a mayor who does such a deed, why does the king not call him to account? Such was the deed that Milkilu and Tagi did: they took Rubutu. And now as for Jerusalem, if this land belongs to the king, why is it (not) of concern to the king like Gaṣa (Haṣattu)? Gath of Carmel (Ginti-kirmil) belongs to Tagi, and men of Gath (Gimti) are the garrison in Beth-Shean (Bitsani). Are we to act like Lab'ayu when he was giving the land of Shechem (Sakmu) to the Hapiru? Milkilu has written to Tagi and the sons [of Lab'ayu]: Be the both of you a protection. Grant all their demands to the men of Keilah, and let us isolate Jerusalem. Addaya has taken the garrison that you sent in the charge of Haya, the son of Miyare; he has stationed it in his own house in Gaṣa and has sent 20 men to Egypt. May the king, my lord, know (that) no garrison of the king is with me. Accordingly, as truly as the king lives, his irpi-official, Pu'uru, has left me and is in Gaṣa. (May the king call this to mind when he arrives) and so may the king send 50 men as a garrison to protect the land. The entire land of the king has deser[ted] (EA 289). Here is the deed against the land that Milkilu and Šuardatu did: against the land of the king, my lord, they hired troops from Gezer, troops from Gath, and troops from Keilah. They seized Rubutu. The land of the king deserted to the Hapiru. And now, besides this, a town belonging to Jerusalem, Bit-^dNIN.URTA¹⁷¹ by name, a city of the king, has gone over to the side of the men of Keilah. May the king give heed to 'Abdi-Heba, your servant, and send archers to restore the land of the king to the king. If there are no archers, the land of the king will desert to the Hapiru. This deed against the land was at the order of Milki[lu and a]t the order of Šuardatu, [together w]ith Gath (EA 290).

Letters of 'Abdi-Heba, the mayor of Jerusalem, describe a situation similar to that of Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos, however, the areas involved are very different as well the leaders of insurrection. Thus, northern Canaan was annexed by 'Abdi-Aširta (its former mayors had to pay him tribute), the king of Amurru, thanks to his 'Apiru, most were Amorite factious, and northern Palestine was racketed by Lab'ayu (then his sons afterwards), the mayor of Shechem, thanks to his 'Apiru, most were Canaanite factious, however the south of Palestine was a country into Hapiru's hands (Hebrews). Moreover, the war in northern Canaan is quite dramatic because many Canaanite mayors were killed whereas the war in the north of Palestine looks more like an insurgency accompanied by

¹⁷¹ The name means "House of Ninurta [Assyrian god of war]", maybe a translation of Kiriath-Baal "City of Baal" (Joshua 15:9,60).

racketeering. Rib-Hadda, the king of Byblos, wrote: *Why have you been negligent, not speaking to the king, your lord, so that you may come out together with archers and fall upon the land of Amurru? If they hear of archers coming out, they will abandon their cities and desert. Do not you yourself know that the land of Amurru follows the stronger party? Look, they are not now being friendly to 'Abdi-Aširta. What will he do to them? [And so] they are longing day and night for the coming out of the archers, and (they say), "Let us join them!" All the mayors long for this to be done to 'Abdi-Aširta, since he sent a message to the men of Ammiya, "Kill your lord and join the 'Apiru. Accordingly, the mayors say, "He will do the same thing to us, and all the lands will be joined to the 'Apiru (EA 73). The war, however, of the 'Apiru against me is severe. (Our) sons and daughters and the furnishings of the houses are gone, since they have been sold [in] the land of Yarimuta for our provisions to keep us alive. For the lack of a cultivator, my field is like a woman without a husband. I have written repeatedly to the palace because of the illness afflicting me, [but there is no one] who has looked at the words that [keep arr]iving. [May the king] give heed [to] the words of [his] servant. [...] The 'Apiru killed Ad[una, the king] of Arkite, but there was no one who said anything to 'Abdi-Aširta, and so they go on taking (territory for themselves). Miya, the ruler of Arašni, seized Ardata, and just now the men of Ammiya have killed their lord. I am afraid. May the king be informed that the king of Hatti has seized all the countries that were vassals of the king of Mittani. Behold, [he] is king of Nahrma [and] the land of the Great Kings, [and] 'Abdi-Aširta, [the servant] and dog, is tak[ing the land of the king] (EA 75). May the king, my lord, know that the war of 'Abdi-Aširta against me is severe. He wants to take [for himself] the two cities that have remained to me. Moreover, what is 'Abdi-Aširta, the dog, that he strives to take all the cities of the king, the Sun, for himself? Is he the king of Mittani, or the king of Kaššu (Babylonia), that he strives to take the land of the king for himself? He has just gathered together all the 'Apiru against Sigata [and] Ampī, and he himself has taken these two cities. I said: There is no place where men can enter against him. He has seized (...) [so] send me [a garris]on of 400 men a[nd x pairs of horses (...)] out to inspect [the coun]try, and yet now that the land of the king and Sumur, your garrison-city, have been joined to the 'Apiru, you have done nothing. Send a large force of archers that it may drive out the king's enemies and all lands be joined to the king (EA 76). Be informed that since Amanappa reached me, all the 'Apiru have at the urging of 'Abdi-Aširta turned against me. May my lord heed the words of his servant. Send me a garrison to guard the city of the king until the archers come out. If there are no archers, then all lands will be joined to the 'Apiru. Listen! Since Bit-Arba was seized [at] the urging of 'Abdi-Aširta, they have as a result been striving to take over Byblos and Batruna, and thus all lands would be joined to the 'Apiru. There are two towns that remain to me, and they want to take them from the king. May my lord send a garrison to his two towns until the archers come out, and may something be given to me for their food. I have nothing at all. Like a bird in a trap (cage), so am I in Byblos. Moreover, if [the kin]g is unable to save me from his enemies, [then al]l lands will be joined to 'Abdi-Aširta. [What is h]e, the dog, that [he ta]kes the lands of the king for himself? (EA 79). Repeatedly to you: The war is against Ardat, against Irqat, and against [...], an[d] Ammiy[a and Sigat]a, loyal cities of the king, [but the king], my lord, [has done nothing]. Moreover, what is [he, 'Abdi-Aširta, the servant (and) dog, that he has acted as he pleased in the lands of my lord, [and yet] the king, my lord, has done nothing for [his] servant? Moreover, I sent my messenger (each time) that he took my cities and moved up against me. Now he has taken Batruna, and he has moved up against me. Behold the city! He has ... the entrance of the gate of Byblos. How long has he not moved from the gate, and so we are unable to go out into the countryside. Moreover, look, he strives to seize Byblos! And [... and] may the king, my lord, give heed t[o the words of] his servant, and [may] he hasten [with] all speed chariots and [troops] that they may gu[ard the city of the king], my lord, and [... until] the arrival of the king, [my] lord. For my part, I will not neglect the word of [my] lord. But i[f the k]ing, my lord, does [not give heed] to the words of [his] ser[vant], then Byblos will be joined to him, and all the lands of the king, as far as Egypt, will be joined to the 'Apiru. Moreover, should my lord not have word brought to his servant by tablet, with all speed, then ... the city to him and I will request a town from him to stay in, and so I will*

stay alive (EA 88). There was war against the[m, but] a garrison [of the king] was with them. There were provisions from the king at their disposal. [Though the war against me] is severe. I have no [provisions from the king or gar]ri[son of the king]. Wh[at shall I] do? As for the mayors, they are the ones who strike our city. They are like dogs, and there is no one who wants to serve them. What am I, who live among 'Apiru, to do? If now there are no provisions from the king for me, my peasantry is going to fight (against me). All lands are at war against me. If the desire of the king is to guard his city and his servant, send a garrison to guard the city. I will guard it while I am alive. When I die, who is going to guard it? (EA 130).

The 'Apiru to 'Abdi-Aširta (King of Amurru) service are different from those associated with Lab'ayu (Mayor of Shechem). Amurru¹⁷² was an unreliable kingdom vassal of Egypt and its king led a secession war through Amorite factious on a large scale (north of Canaan). Shechem was an unreliable town vassal of Egypt and its mayor led an small insurgency around the town through some raids by Canaanite mercenaries. Two areas were little affected by these conflicts: the kingdom of Hazor in central Canaan and southern Palestine inhabited by people called Hapiru "Hebrews". The equivalence Hapiru = Hebrews is complicated by the mix of people in Palestine and the fact that many cities conquered by Joshua became in time back again Canaanite (partially or fully). For example: And the sons of Israel dwelt in among the Canaanites, the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. And they proceeded to take their daughters as wives for themselves, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they took up serving their gods (Judges 3:5-6). As for the Jebusites who were dwelling in Jerusalem¹⁷³, the sons of Judah were not able to drive them away; and the Jebusites continue dwelling with the sons of Judah in Jerusalem down to this day (Joshua 15:63). And they did not drive away the Canaanites who were dwelling in Gezer, and the Canaanites continue dwelling in among Ephraim down to this day and came to be subject to slavish forced labor (Joshua 16:10). And Manasseh did not take possession of Beth-Shean and its dependent towns and Taanach and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Dor and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Ibleam and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its dependent towns, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in this land. And it came about that Israel grew strong and proceeded to set the Canaanites to forced labor, and they did not drive them out completely. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were dwelling in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to dwell in among them in Gezer. Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron and the inhabitants of Nabalol, but the Canaanites continued to dwell in among them and came to be subject to forced labor. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Akko and the inhabitants of Sidon and Ahalab and Achzib and Helbah and Aphik and Rehob. And the Asherites continued to dwell in among the Canaanites inhabiting the land, because they did not drive them out. Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but they continued to dwell in among the Canaanites inhabiting the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became theirs for forced labor. And the Amorites kept pressing the sons of Dan into the mountainous region, for they did not allow them to come down into the low plain. So the Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres and in Ajjalon and Shaalbim. But the hand of the house of Joseph got to be so heavy that they were forced into task work. And the territory of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akkrabbim, from Sela upward (Judges 1:27-36). Several Hebrew cities became again Canaanite a little while later: In time Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to the brothers of his mother and began speaking to them and to all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying: Speak, please, in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem: Which is better for you, for seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, to rule over you or for one man to rule over you? And you must remember that your bone and

¹⁷² The Amurru is mentioned in the Mari letters (to -1700) as southern neighbor of Qatna's kingdom. It was perhaps a federation of several cities, the most important seems to have been Hazor. The Damascus region (Apu country) may have belonged to this group. After 1340 BCE, the Amurru (which the capital is not known) becomes a vassal kingdom of Hatti.

¹⁷³ The execration texts (c. 1950 BCE) report the name [U]rusalimum "City of Salem" in accordance with the biblical text (Genesis 14:18; Hebrews 7:1) placing the name at the time of Abraham (c. 1950 BCE). The name Yebus (Judges 19:10) which means "trample" is not attested but Mari texts (c. 1800 BCE) experiencing Amorite anthroponym Yabusi'um. A Amorite clan "those of Yabusi" would therefore have been settled in Jerusalem (E. LIPINSKI Itineraria Phoenicia in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 127 (2004) Peeters p. 502).

your flesh I am. So the brothers of his mother began speaking all these words about him in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem so that their heart inclined toward Abimelech, for they said: He is our own brother. Then they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of Baal-berith, and with them Abimelech proceeded to hire idle and insolent men, that they might accompany him. After that he went to the house of his father at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, upon one stone, but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left over, because he had hid. Subsequently all the landowners of Shechem and all the house of Millo gathered together and went and made Abimelech reign as king [ruler], close by the big tree, the pillar that was in Shechem (Judges 9:1-6).

The area inhabited by the Hapiru in Palestine was substantially the same as Shasu's country described by Egyptians texts. This area of Palestine seems escaping the rulership of Egypt, since the Commissioner of Sumur was responsible only for the land of Amurru (from Byblos to the south of Ugarit and inward up to Orontes). The Commissioner of Kumidu administered Apu country (around Damascus), a territory from Kadesh, in southern Syria, to Hazor in the north of Palestine, and from Damascus area to the northern Transjordan. Finally, the Commissioner of Gaza controlled Palestine, except Shasu's countries, and a part of the Phoenician coast, probably up to Beirut¹⁷⁴.

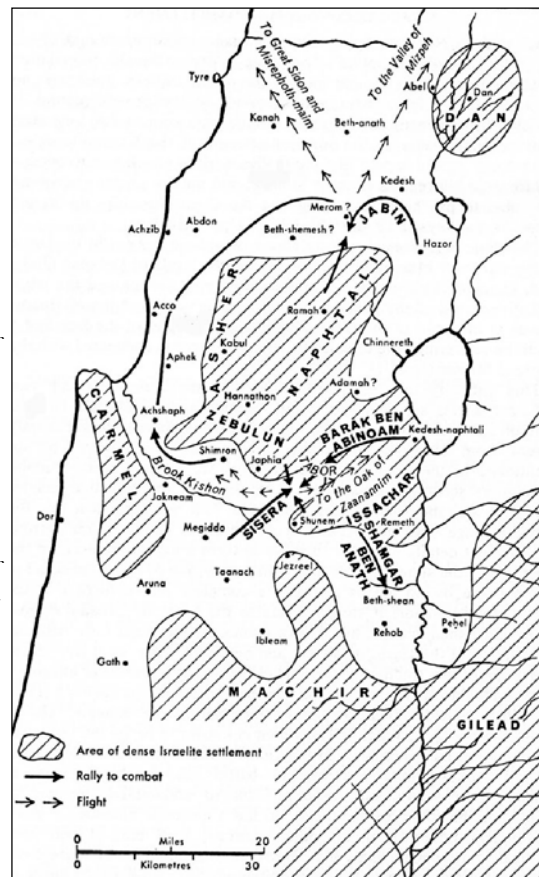
The events described in the Amarna letters are consistent with those of the biblical text. Palestine is occupied by the Hebrews (Hapiru, not 'Apiru), the south is at peace with its neighbors and is slightly administered (not ruled, by the judge Ehud) and north of the country is oppressed (and racketed) by the powerful king of Hazor via his general: Sisera. It is therefore essential to determine the role and chronology of the king of Hazor (Jabin II). Amazingly, that case arise a huge problem because although he is the most powerful king of Canaan (he is the only one to bear the title of king) he appears not to intervene in conflicts, in addition, he disappears for no apparent reason at the time of the 'Apiru's war and is replaced by a mayor and not by a king. Even stranger, the mayor of Hazor is accused to be passed to the enemy ('Apiru): *I write to the king, my lord, because every day the king of Sidon has captured a palace attendant of mine. May the king give attention to his servant, and may he charge his commissioner to give Usu to his servant for water, for fetching wood, for straw, for clay. Since he has acted hostilely, has he not violated the oath? There is not another palace attendant. The one who raids the land of the king is the king of Sidon. The king of Hazor has abandoned his house and has aligned himself with the 'Apiru. May the king be concerned about the palace attendants. These are treacherous fellows. He has taken over the land of the king for the 'Apiru. May the king ask his commissioner, who a familiar with Canaan (EA 148). Message of the king of Hazor. I fall at the feet of my lord. Look, I have the cities of the king, my lord, under guard until my lord reaches [me]. And when I heard these words of yours and of the coming forth of the Sun to me, I rejoiced accordingly. I pondered (the news), and my jubilation came forth. There was peace, and the gods themselves looked (favorably) on me. And I have indeed prepared everything until the arrival of the king, [my] lord. Look, whenever [Han]i, your messenger, arrives, the heart rejoices exceedingly (EA 227). The following letters refer only to the "ruler of Hazor" not king: Message of 'Abdi-Tirši, the ruler of Hazor, your servant. I fall at the feet of the king, my lord, 7 times and 7 times (at the feet of the king, my lord). As I am the loyal servant of the king, my lord, I am indeed guarding Hazor together with its villages for the king, my lord. May the king, my lord, recall whatever has been done against Hazor, your city, and against your servant (EA 228). Message of Ayyab, your servant. I fall at the feet of my lord 7 times and 7 times. I am the servant of the king, my lord, the dirt at his feet. I have heard what the king, my lord, wrote to me through Atahmaya. Truly, I have guarded very carefully [the citie]s of the king, my lord. Moreover, note that it is the ruler of Hazor who has taken 3 cities from me. From the time I heard and verified this, there has been waging of war against him. Truly, may the king, my lord, take cognizance, and may the king, my lord, give thought to his servant (EA 364).*

¹⁷⁴ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna
in: LIPO n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 34-35.

Some scholars¹⁷⁵ to explain the "absence" of the powerful king of Hazor during this period assume he was in the orbit and protection of the king of Mitanni. This explanation is not possible for two reasons: Šuppiluliuma I did not hesitate to attack Mitanni despite its power and Amarna letters indicate that the king of Hazor: *has abandoned his house and has aligned himself with the 'Apiru*. This last sentence is unexplained, except by the Bible

King of Hazor's death coincides with the appointment of Barak, a Hebrew judge who fought Jabin II, the king of Hazor, killed at that time (Judges 4:1-24). Although Jabin is presented as king of Canaan, in fact it was Sisera who controlled the north of Palestine. The title "king of Canaan" was honorary¹⁷⁶, it was already used at the time of the conquest of Joshua as it is specified about Jabin I: *Jabin king of Hazor heard about this (...) Joshua then turned back and captured Hazor, putting its king to the sword. Hazor in olden days was the capital of all these kingdoms* (Joshua 11:1,10). Jabin II's death early in the conflict explains his "absence" among Amarna letters. This king ruled Palestine not because of numerical superiority but thanks to his weapons¹⁷⁷ (Judges 4:3; 5:8). Thus, after the disappearance of his "900 iron chariots," the kingdom of Hazor did not played any major role in the region.

The role of Sisera as prince of the army of Jabin II is paramount (Psalms 83:9), as it is then the only one to be quoted (1Samuel 12:9). The Hebrew word *sar* "prince/leader" is used instead of *rosh* "head/chief" (1Samuel 15:17). This character must be important because it is mentioned in a treaty of alliance between two kings of the region¹⁷⁸: *As from today, Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, and Aziru, king of the Amurru, did between them (an agreement) by oath (...) If bunches of Hapiru make raids in my country Aziru will fight against my enemy with chariots and soldiers. If there are troubles in my country Aziru will come to my rescue <with> his chariots and his troops. On the other hand, Sisaruwa (si-sa-ru-wa) is a subject of the king and the city of Ustanu is his residence. If Sisaruwa behaves as an enemy to the king, Aziru will fight against Sisaruwa with his chariots and his troops.* According to the biblical text, Sisera (Sisara in the LXX) is dead just before the end of the rulership of Jabin II over Israel, whereas this treaty must be concluded to this date, and therefore early in the reigns of Niqmaddu III and Aziru. Former area of the king of Hazor



therefore came under the control of 'Apiru (in fact Hapiru). According to the text of Judges 4:24-25, Jabin II, initially at peace with the Hebrews was defeated gradually. Despite the crucial role of the Hapiru in Palestine¹⁷⁹, the Amarna letters never mention their ruler, which could be explained by the fact that Barak was only a judge or a counsellor.

¹⁷⁵ A. ZARZECKI-PELEG, R. BONFIL – Hazor – A Syrian City-State in Mitanni's Orbit? in: *Ugarit-Forschungen* 43 (2011) pp. 537-567.

¹⁷⁶ Using a former title "king" in a honorific way is a current Eastern practice.

¹⁷⁷ At that time a garrison of 400 men and pairs of horses was enough to control a whole territory (letter EA 76).

¹⁷⁸ S. LACKENBACHER – Textes akkadiens d'Ugarit in: *LIPO* n° 20 (2002) Éd. Cerf pp. 64-65, 180-181.

¹⁷⁹ Y. AHARONI – The Land of the Bible Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 220-225.

The role of the king of Hazor (Jabin II) at this particular time (ca. 1350 BCE), and that of Sisera as well, confirms the biblical story in a striking way:

- Jabin was the sole ruler in Canaan who had the title of king (instead of mayor).
- The king of Hazor died at the beginning of Apiru's war (ca. 1350 BCE).
- The land of the king of Hazor was given to the Hapiru (Hebrews) afterwards.
- The substitute of the king of Hazor, who no longer has the title of king, complained of what happened to his city before.
- Sisera, chief of Uštanu, was a powerful ruler.
- The name Sisera (*Zi-ṣa-ru-wa* / *Si-sa-ru-wa* in Babylonian, which meaning is unclear¹⁸⁰) is unique in the whole Bible and also in the whole onomastic corpus¹⁸¹.
- Sisera died at the beginning of 'Apiru's war (ca. 1350 BCE).
- Haroshet-ha-Goiim was the residence of Sisera (Judges 4:13, Jerusalem Bible), but this famous locality remains unknown up till now! This name means "Wooded place (1Samuel 23:15) of nations"; "Wooded place in Lebanon (Ezekiel 31:3)"; "Forest of Lebanon (1Kings 7:2)". The city of Uštanu was the residence of Sisera and was indeed situated in Lebanon between Ugarit and Amurru¹⁸².
- After Sisera's death his kingdom (Uštanu)¹⁸³ was annexed to that of Siyannu¹⁸⁴.

As the backbone of history is chronology, the best confirmation of the foregoing facts is to check their exact dating. Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian chronologies, calibrated by astronomy, are used to fix all the other chronologies (Hatti, Ugarit, Mitanni, Amurru¹⁸⁵ and Israelite chronology drawn from the Bible).

- Muršili II's reign can be dated precisely¹⁸⁶ because at the beginning of his 10th year there was "a solar omen"¹⁸⁷ (total eclipse on the Hittite capital Hattuša). During this period 1330-1310 BCE there was only one total solar eclipse on Hittite territory, that of 24 June 1312 BCE¹⁸⁸ which accords, in addition, with other chronologies (Egyptian and Babylonian). In his annals, the king mentions the death of his father and his older brother during his accession, all these events are held in a single campaign in 1322 BCE¹⁸⁹, between April and November. Šuppiluliuma died in 1322 BCE and his son Arnuwanda II during the 6th and final year of the war. Proceedings of Šuppiluliuma mention a period of 20 years between the Hurrian war of 6 years and the Syrian war of 1 year (KUB 19:9 I). The preparation of the Syrian war covered a period of 3 or 4 years after the 1st unsuccessful attack against Tušratta at the beginning of his reign (KBo I:1.)
- Proceedings of Šuppiluliuma (28 III:11-15) tells us that after Akhenaten's death the craven widow of Semenkhkare (*[Nip]Hururiya*) asked a son to Hittite king for becoming a Pharaoh in Egypt. The chronological reconstruction of this period is as follows: the

¹⁸⁰ Sīsrā (Ezra 2:53) means perhaps "a field of battle" in Syriac (*sīrsarḥā*) or "fading flower of wind" (Isaiah 28:4) in Hebrew (*śīšā rīah*).

¹⁸¹ R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël. La période des juges
Paris 1987 Éd. Gabalda pp. 102-103.

¹⁸² J.-M. MICHAUD – La Bible et l'héritage d'Ougarit
Sherbrooke 2005 Éd. C.G.C. PP. 82-84.

¹⁸³ G. BECKMAN – Hittite Diplomatic Texts
Atlanta 1999 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 175-176.

¹⁸⁴ F. MALBRANT-LABAT – Siyannu, Uštanu et Ugarit
in: De la Tablilla a la Inteligencia Artificial (Instituto de Estudios Islamicos y del Oriente Proximo, 2003) pp. 67-75.

¹⁸⁵ S. IZRE'EL – Singer, A Concise History of Amurru
in: Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study vol. II (Ed. Scholars Press, 1991) pp. 172-179.

¹⁸⁶ E. WENTE, C. VAN SICKLE – Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes
in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 39 (Chicago, 1976) p. 249.


¹⁸⁷ I. SINGER – Hittite Prayers
Atlanta 2002 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 75,77.

P.J. HUBER – The Solar Omen of Mursili II
in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121 (2001) pp. 640-644.

¹⁸⁸ <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEcat5/SE-1399-1300.html> <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEsearch/SEsearchmap.php?Ecl=-13110624>

¹⁸⁹ T. BRYCE – The Kingdom of the Hittites
Oxford 2005 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 154-220.

total solar eclipse of 14 May 1338 BCE on the city of Akhenaten, cited in allusion on the Amon's priest graffito dated III Akhet 10, Year 3 of Ankhkheperure¹⁹⁰ (1st August 1337 BCE), explains the strange behavior of the queen to get a king on the throne of Egypt and also the change to sun worship from the time (Amon replacing Aton).

- Akhet-Aton (*3ht-'itm*) means "where the sun disk rises [Aton's horizon]" represented by the hieroglyph  exactly imitating the sun appearing in the notch of the mountain in Amarna. The temple in the city was inaugurated on IV Peret 13 in year 5 of Akhenaten and commemorated in Year 6 at the same date¹⁹¹. The fact that the temple is oriented exactly in line with the Royal Wadi¹⁹² suggests that Akhenaten chose to inaugurate the city, the precise day when the sun rose in the notch of the mountain, illuminating the temple as a laser beam. The simulation of sunrise observed at that location¹⁹³ (14th century BCE) indicates that it appeared to 4:38 UT in the notch of the mountain (which apparent diameter is 0.9 °, one of the sun is 0.5°) only two days in the year: 3/4 March and 5/6 November, as the apparent path of the sun drift of about 0.4° per day at the horizon (0° altitude) to go back and forth between the two extreme positions reached at solstices on 1st January and 5 July (spring equinox fell on 2 April¹⁹⁴ at that time¹⁹⁵). This implies that the equation: IV Peret 13 = 3 March¹⁹⁶ [day of solar illumination in the temple] was satisfied only for 4 years, from 1341 to 1338 BCE. As the commemoration of IV Peret 13 stopped at the 6th year of Akhenaten (no 7th year), we can assume that it was the last year of his reign without co-regency (17th year from his co-regency). The accession of Akhenaten being located on I or II Peret, his 5th year began around January 1341 BCE and his 6th year to January 1340 BCE¹⁹⁷. His father Amenhotep III died on April 1345 BCE during the year 38 of his reign. Letter EA 106 was written 5 years after the beginning of the war (1352 BCE) and EA 116 after Akhenaten sat on the throne.
- Tušratta wrote 7 letters¹⁹⁸ to Amenhotep III (EA 17 to EA 26) then 3 letters to Amenhotep IV (EA 27 to EA 29). He relates in his first letter (EA 17) his accession to the throne after the murder of his brother Artasuwara, then the following year attack of the Hittite king [Šuppiluliuma] that he managed to repel. EA 23 letter (BM 29793) is dated IV Peret 1 Year 36 and 27 EA letter is dated I Peret [5] Year [1]2 of Amenhotep IV. Correspondence with Amenhotep III was intense because the EA 20 letter stated that the following letter will be sent 6 months later, involving a total period of 4 or 5 years between the first and last letter. Correspondence with Amenhotep IV was more relaxed since the last letter written to Amenhotep IV (EA 29) states "my messengers for 4 years", involving a period of at least 4 years between the first and the last letter.
- Šuppiluliuma I congratulated Semenkhkare (*Hureya*) when he ascended Egypt's throne (EA 41), then mentions the murder of Tušratta in a letter to Semenkhkare (EA 43).

This allows reconstructing the reigns of Šuppiluliuma and Tušratta. Šuppiluliuma and his son Arnuwanda II died in 1322 BCE. The 1st year of the Hurrian war of 6 years goes back in 1327 BCE, year of Tutankhamun's death. The Syrian war of 1 year against

¹⁹⁰ W.J. MURNANE – Texts from the Amarna Period

Atlanta 1995 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 207-208.

¹⁹¹ W.J. MURNANE - The "First Occasion of the Discovery" of Akhet-Aton

in: *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 14 (1987) pp. 239-246.

¹⁹² D.P. SILVERMAN, J.W. WEGNER, J.H. WEGNER – Akhenaten and Tutankhamun Revolution and Restoration Philadelphia 2006 Ed. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology pp. 43-55.

¹⁹³ R.A. WELLS - The Amarna M.X.K Boundary Stelae Date: A Modern Calendar Equivalent

in: *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 14 (1987) pp. 313-333.

¹⁹⁴ <http://www.imcce.fr/fr/grandpublic/temps/saisons.php>

¹⁹⁵ This coincidence of 3 March happening today on 18 February [azimuth 102.7 ° at the horizon 0°], the apparent path of the sun moving towards the summer solstice (on 5 July). The Egyptian calendar was being exactly 365 days it drifted from one day every 4 years compared to the true solar year of 365.24 days [or a drift of about 0.1° per year].

¹⁹⁶ The other possibility IV Peret 13 = 5 November has no solution in the 14th century BCE.

¹⁹⁷ The posthumous stele of year 8 has been completed in the last year of the 4-year cycle, in 1338 BCE.

¹⁹⁸ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna

in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 48, 110-190.

Amurru is dated 1348 BCE and Šuppiluliuma's attack against Tušratta in 1352 BCE. Tušratta likely to have begun to reign 1 year before the attack and died during the brief reign of Semenkhhare¹⁹⁹ (c. 1338 BCE). Akhenaten's death in 1340 BCE (year 6 of his reign = year 17 of Amenhotep IV) and EA 9 letter that Burna-Burias II sent to Tutankhamun, shortly after his accession, has coincided with the beginning of his reign in 1336 BCE (3 years before Burna-Burias II's death in 1333 BCE). Synchronisms are highlighted:

<i>Astronomical dating</i>	EGYPT		MITANNI	HATTI	
	Amenhotep III		Šutarna II		Tuthaliya III
	1357	27			
	1356	28	Amenhotep IV	Artašumara	
	1355	29	2		
	1354	30	3	Tušratta	
	1353	31	[1]		Šuppiluliuma I
<i>first letters</i>	1352	32 (EA 254)	[2]		1 st attack
	1351	33	EA 17, EA 18	1	2
	1350	34	EA 19, EA 20	2	3
	1349	35	EA 21, EA 22	3	4
	1348	36 (EA 75)	EA 23, EA 24	4	'1 year War'
	1347	37 (EA 106)	EA 25	5	6/1
	1346	38	EA 26		2
	1345	Akhenaten	12 (EA 116)	EA 27	1
	1344	2	[13]		2
	1343	3	14	EA 28	3
	1342	4	[15]		4
3 March	1341	5	[16]	EA 29	
3 March	1340	6	17		
	1339	[-]	Semenkhhare	[15]	
14 May	1338	*8*	2	(EA 43)	
	1337		Ankhhkeperure		
<i>last letters</i>	1336		Tutankhamun	(EA 9)	24
	1335		2		25
	1334		3		26
	1333		4	(Burna-Buriaš II)	27
	1332		5		
	1331		6		
	1330		7		
	1329		8		
	1328		9		
	1327		10		'6 years War'
	1326		Aḫ		
	1325		2		
	1324		3		
	1323		4		
	1322		Horemheb		Arnuwanda II
	1321		2		Muršili II
	1320		3		2
	1319		4		3
	1318		5		4
	1317		6		5
	1316		7		6
	1315		8		7
	1314		9		8
	1313		10		9
24 June	1312		11		10

¹⁹⁹ J. FREU, M. MAZOYER – Les débuts du nouvel empire hittite. Les Hittites et leur histoire Paris 2007 Éd. L'Harmattan p. 271.

Many synchronisms and the 4 absolute dates fixed by astronomy, guarantee an exact chronology for this period. However, current Egyptologists reject it on the grounds that the co-regency between Amenhotep III and his son Amenhotep IV is impossible, because according to them the pharaohs never share their power. This dogma from Egyptologists is of course contrary to historical data and mainly reflects their own conception of power. It is unfortunate that young researchers do not dare to denounce the absurdity of such a doctrine, in effect:

- Tutankhamun says clearly to be a son of Amenhotep III and, as he died at the age of about 20 years (according to the state of his mummy), his statement can only be true if there was a co-regency of at least 11 years. Without co-regency, the death of Amenhotep III is separated from that of Tutankhamun by 30 years (= 17+3+10), and he could not be his son because, depending the examination of his mummy, he would be dead at the age of 20²⁰⁰, as confirmed by his coronation chair made for a 10 years old child. In addition, Suppiluliuma I was informed of Tutankhamun's death at the end of his campaign which ended before the onset of winter (November). With the co-regency, the gap is 19 years (= 6+3+10), in agreement with his probable birth to the end of the reign of Amenhotep III in 1347 (= 1327 + 20). Thus the successor of Akhenaten was first his brother, then Tutankhamun 3 years later. There is a paradox for those who refuse the co-regency and Gabolde agrees: *then why, if Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten, would have he hidden it in this way his real ancestry to proclaim, on occasion, he was the «son» of Amenhotep III? (...) The legitimacy of Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten has never been questioned under Tutankhamun and continuity was maintained during his reign in the traditional pattern: a son succeeded his father.* To assume that Tutankhamun would have denied his "father" Akhenaten (who had only girls!) for religious reasons is unprecedented and leads to an absurdity: *Admittedly, it is paradoxical to consider that Tutankhamun may seemingly, in the same spirit, honor his father and deny him all at once and there is no obvious explanation for this contradiction*²⁰¹. The obvious explanation exists: Tutankhamun was the son of Amenhotep III (pharaohs know their history better than Egyptologists).
- As Akhenaten had six daughters (but none son), if Tutankhamun was Akhenaten's son really he would have been a hidden son! The tabloid newspapers find attractive this assumption, but it is baseless.
- If Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten, why Semenkhkare succeeded his brother Akhetaten instead of his own son? There is no simple explanation for this anomaly.
- The mention of a *sed* feast in the year 30 of Amenhotep III, as reported by Amenhotep IV during his 3rd year²⁰², confirms the 11-year co-regency. Those²⁰³ who refuse this co-regency are obliged to say that this *sed* festival commemorating 30 years of reign, mentioned by Amenhotep IV, would have been anachronistic. This Pharaoh would use the festival only in order to proclaim his "divine" quality and would have violated the ancestral ritual of commemorations, which is not credible.

The chronology of the Babylonians, Assyrians, Egyptians and Hittite kings is anchored at less than 1 year over the period 1360-1330 BCE. Numerous synchronisms are then used to fix the chronology of other kings with nearly the same precision (+/- 2 years):

²⁰⁰ This age is approximate, a difference of + / - 2 years is possible. On the other hand, the month of his death must be around October because a label on a jar dated year 17 (partially erased and changed to 1) refers to honey and honey harvesting in Egypt, in the valley, was carried out in September (P.T. NICHOLSON, I. SHAW – *Ancient Materials and Technology*, Cambridge, 2000, pp. 410-411).

²⁰¹ M. GABOLDE - D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon
Lyon 1998 Éd. Institut d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Antiquité p. 293.

²⁰² L.E. BAILEY – Amenhotep III and Akhenaten : an Examination of the Coregency Issues
Chicago 2000 E. University of Chicago pp. 14,26-28,38.

²⁰³ M. GABOLDE - D'Akhenaton à Toutânkhamon
Lyon 1998 Éd. Institut d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'Antiquité pp. 26-28.

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

KING OF ASSYRIA	reign	KING OF BABYLON	reign	KING OF EGYPT	reign
Eriša-Adad I	1385-1358	Kadašman-Enlil I	1375-1360	Amenhotep III	1383-1345
Aššur-uballit I	1358 -	Burna-Buriaš II	1360 -	Akhenaten	1356-1340
				Semenkhkare	1340-1338
				-Ankhkheperure	1338-1336
			-1333	Tutankhamon	1336 -
		Kurigalzu II	1333 -		-1327
	-1323		-1308	Ay	1327-1323

KING OF HATTI	reign	KING OF UGARIT	reign	KING OF MITANNI	reign
Tuthaliya III	1370 - -1353	Ammištamru II	1360 -	Šutarna II	1373-1355
				Artasumara	1355-1353
Šuppiluliuma I	1353 -		-1347	Tušratta	1353 -
		Niqmaddu III	1347 -		-1339
	-1322			Artatama II	1339-1325
Arnuwanda II	-1322		-1315	Šutarna III	1339-1325
Muršili II	1322-1295	Arḫalbu	1315-1313	Šattiwaza	1325 -
					-1300

KING OF CARKEMISH	reign	KING OF AMURRU	reign	KING OF SIYANNU	reign
(vassal of Hatti)		Abdi-Aširta	1370-1347	Abdi-Ḫebat	1370-1345
?		Aziru	1347 -	Abdi-Anati	1345-1325
Šarri-Kušuh	1325-1310		-1314	[Šarri-Kušuh?]	1325-1313

RULER OF HAZOR	reign	RULER OF USNATU	rule	N. PALESTINE RULER	rule
?		?		(Ehud)	1386-1366
King [Jabin] (EA 227)	1370-1345	Sisera (RS 19.68)	1370-1345	Jabin II	1366-1346
Mayor Abdi-Tirši	1345-1325	Abdi-Anati	1345-1325	Barak	1346-1306

The letter EA 75 allows dating the 'Apiru's war, it reads²⁰⁴: *[May] the king, my lord, know that Byblos, the maidservant of the king from ancient times, is safe and sound. The war, however, of the 'Apiru against me is severe (...). The 'Apiru killed Ad[una, the king] of Arkite, but there was no one who said anything to 'Abdi-Aširta, and so they go on taking (territory for themselves) (...). May the king be informed that the king Hatti has seized all the countries that were vassal of the king of Mittani. Behold, [he] is king of Naḫrima [and] the land of the Great Kings, [and] 'Abdi-Aširta, [the servant] and dog, is tak[ing the land of the king]. Send archers. This war in Canaan, which occurred just before Amenhotep III's death (EA 116), dated 1345 BCE, matches the war dated 1347 BCE²⁰⁵ led in Syria by Šuppiluliuma I. It reads: *May the king, my lord, know that the war [again]st us is very severe. As to its being told to you, "Sumur belongs to the king," may the king know that there was an attack on our garrison, and the sons of 'Abdi-Aširta seized it. And so there has been no one to carry word to the king. But give thought to the fact that I am your loyal servant, and whatever I hear I write to [my] lord. Moreover, give thought to Sumur. It is like a bird in a trap (cage): [The war] is very severe, and the messengers that [came] from the palace were unable to get [in]to Sumur. It was by night that I got them in. And here is how Yapah-Hadda [mayor of Beirut] is not just in my regard: when my man arrived, he bound him. May what is due to me [be gi]ven; it is very much. Now as the king is going to send the royal commissioners, may the king tell them to decide between us. If the king gives (the property) to his servant, well and good! Or, on the other hand, let the king take everything for himself. Moreover, all my towns have been joined to the 'Apiru, and all of them [are extremely hostile] to me, for [Yapah-Hadda keeps devising] evil upon evil against me. They have nothing, having paid ransom money, some twice, some three times. May the king heed the words of his loyal servant and give provisions to his servant and his maidservant, Byblos. Moreover, it would please me were I with you and so at peace. Look, Aziru and Yapah-Hadda have made**

²⁰⁴ W.L. MORAN –The Amarna Letters

London 2002 Ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press pp. 145-146.

²⁰⁵ T.R. BRYCE – Some observations on the Chronology of Šuppiluliuma's Reign in: *Anatolian Studies* XXXIX (1989) pp. 19-30.

an agreement against me, and I am unable [to d]o anything. Their actions [are hosti]le to me. Accordingly, my situation is extremely grave. Moreover, note that we have been loyal servants of the king from ancient times. Moreover, note that I am your loyal servant, but I have nothing but distress. Note this matter. Note that I am the dirt at your feet, O king! Note: did not your father come out and visit (his) lands and his mayors? And now the gods and the Sun and the Lady of Byblos have granted that you be seated on the throne of your father's house (to rule) your land. Who are they, the sons of 'Abdi-Aširta, that they have taken the lands of the king for themselves? The king of Mittani? The king of Kaššu (Babylonia)? The king of Hatti? May the king send archers (and) Yanhamu along with [the prefec]ts from the land of Yarimuta. The commissioner from Kumidu (EA 116).

Paralleling synchronisms implies dating the war of 'Apiru just after the "1 year war" in Syria led by Šuppiluliuma I (from around April 1347 BCE), 4 years after his first attack against the Mitanni in 1352 BCE.

year		[A]	[B]	[C]	[D]	[E]	[F]	[G]	
-1347	1 X	36			5		19		[A] Amenhotep III King of Egypt
	2 XI								Letter EA 23 (year 36 of Amenhotep III)
	3 XII	***	10		***				
	4 I					13	20	***	[F, G] Jabin II King of Hazor. Letter EA 75 (war in Syria led by King of Hatti, war of 'Apiru being in progress)
	5 II			11	6				
	6 III						0		[B] Amenhotep IV King of Egypt
	7 IV								[C] Aššur-uballit I King of Assyria
	8 V								[D] Šuppiluliuma I King of Hatti
	9 VI								[E] Tušratta King of Mitanni
	10 VII	37							
	11 VIII								
	12 IX								
-1346	1 X								[F] Baraq Judge of Israel
	2 XI								[G] Abdi-Tirši Mayor of Hazor
	3 XII		11						
	4 I					14	1		
	5 II			12	7				
	6 III								
	7 IV								
	8 V								
	9 VI								
	10 VII	38							
	11 VIII								
	12 IX								
-1345	1 X								
	2 XI								
	3 XII		12						
	4 I					15	2		
	5 II			13	8				
	6 III								
	7 IV								
	8 V	1							[A] Akhenaten, [B] Amenhotep IV King of Egypt
	9 VI	***				***			Letter EA 26 Amenhotep III is dead
	10 VII								
	11 VIII								
	12 IX	***				***			Letter EA 27 dated December year [1]2 of Amenhotep IV
-1344	1 X								
	2 XI	***							Reception of foreign tributes dated February year 12
	3 XII	2	[13]						
	4 I					16	3		
	5 II			14	9				
	6 III								

The aggression of Šuppiluliuma I in Syria caused a chain reaction which destabilized all the region, from the north with the big kingdoms of Mitanni (ally of Egypt) and Amurru (unreliable vassal of Egypt), to the south with the numerous small kingdoms of Canaan (vassals of Egypt) and Palestine (troubled area). The period of destabilization was intense but short (1447-1445 BCE) since most of the Amarna letters concern this short period. The parallel of the main protagonists in time and space, illuminates the sequence of events:

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

Land	City	Ruler (king or mayor)		Title
		1355 BCE	1345 BCE	1335 BCE
Hatti		Šuppiluliuma I		King
Mitanni		Tušratta		King
	Ugarit	Ammištamru II	Niqmaddu III	King
	Uštanu (<i>Lebanon</i>)	Sisera (Sisaruwa)	(Abdi-Anati)	Ruler
Siyannu (<i>Lebanon</i>)		‘Abdi-Ḥebat	Abdi-Anati	King
Amurru (<i>Lebanon</i>)		‘Abdi-Aširta	Aziru	King
Canaan (<i>Syria</i>)	Qatna	Akizzi		Mayor
	Kadesh (Qidšu)	Aitukama		Mayor
	Arkite (Irqata)	Aduna	?	Mayor
	Lapana (<i>entering Hamath</i>)	Tiwati		Mayor
	Byblos (Gubla)	Rib-Hadda	Ili-Rapiḥ	Mayor
	Beirut (Biruta)	Yapaḥ-Hadda	Ammunira	Mayor
	Kumidu (<i>Kamid el-Loṣ</i>)	Biryawaza		Mayor
	Sidon (Šiduna)	Zimredda		Mayor
	Tyre (Šurru)	Abi-Milku		Mayor
	Hazor (Hašura)	[Jabin II] King	Abdi-Tirši	Mayor
	Akko (Akka)	Satatna		Mayor
	Ashtaroth (Aštartu)	Ayyab		Mayor
	Hannaton (Ḥinnatuna)		[?]	Mayor?
Palestine (<i>Israel</i>)	Megiddo (Magidda)	Biridiya		Mayor
	Pella (Piḥilu)	Mut-Baḥli		Mayor
	Shechem (Sakmu)	Lab’ayu	Lab’ayu's sons	Mayor
	Gezer (Gazru)	Adda-danu/ Milkilu	Yapaḥu	Mayor
	Jerusalem (Urusalim)	‘Abdi-Ḥeba		Mayor
	Keilah (Qiltu)	Šuwardata	‘Abdi-Aštarti	Mayor
	Lachish (Lakiša)	Šipti-Ba’la/ Zimredda	Yabni-ilu	Mayor
Egypt		Amenhotep III	Akhenaten	King

The first purpose of wars was to annex a country for further payments of tribute. Rulers who refused to comply were ransomed in order to get a booty and sometimes killed. The great kingdoms of that time received tributes paid by their vassals (once a year) and gave them in exchange a police protection. For example two letters, from Burna-Buriāš II to Tutankhamun (*Nibḥureriya*), show that the protection of the king of Egypt was defective in Canaan and consequently the Canaanite mayors sought changing to ally with other kings: *Now, my merchants who were on their way with Aḥu-rabu, were detained in Canaan for business matters. After Aḥu-tabu went on to my brother, in Hinnatuna [Joshua 19:14] of Canaan, Šum-Adda, the son of Balumme, and Šutatna, the son of Šaratum of Akka, having sent their men, killed my merchants and took away their money. I send [...] to you posthaste. Inquire [from him so] he can inform you. Canaan is your country, and [its] kings [are your servants]. In your country I have been despoiled. Bring [them] to account and make compensation for the money that they took away. Put to death the men who put my servants [to] death, and so avenge their blood. And if you do not put these men to death, they are going to kill again, be it a caravan of mine or your own messengers, and so messengers between us will thereby be cut off. And if they try to deny this to you, Šum-Adda, having blocked the passage of one man of mine, retained him in his company, and another man, having been forced into service by Šutatna of Akka, is still serving him. These men should be brought to you so you can investigate, inquire [whether they are] dead, and thus become informed (EA 8). In the time of Kurigalzu, my ancestor, all the Canaanites, wrote here to him, saying: Come to the border of the country so we can revolt and be allied with you. My ancestor sent them this (reply), saying: Forget about being allied with me. If you become enemies of the king of Egypt, and are allied with anyone else, will I not then come and plunder you? How can there be an alliance with me? For the sake of your ancestor my ancestor did not listen to them. Now, as for my Assyrian vassals, I was not the one who sent them to you. Why on their own authority have they come to your country? If you love me, they will conduct no business whatsoever. Send them off to me empty-handed (EA 9).*

Historical context explains the strategic role of Syria which was a hub in international trade at that time. Since Amenhotep II (1420-1392) the Egyptians were going to control the great trade route to Mesopotamia through alliances with the Mitanni²⁰⁶. Dynastic marriages between Thutmose IV (1392-1383) and Artatama I (1390-1373) will seal definitely the alliance between Egypt and Mitanni (EA 29:16). Thus the entire Mediterranean coast (from Philistia to Phoenicia) was controlled by Egyptians, as far as Byblos and the north west of Syria (kingdom of Carchemish) was under the control of the Hittites. This balance will be broken after the attack north of Hatti by Kaska (EA 31:26-27). Tudhaliya III (1370-1353) embarked on the monumental task of winning back his kingdom from the enemy forces which had occupied his land which laid the foundations in the campaigns of reconquest²⁰⁷. When Tudhaliya III died his son Šuppiluliuma continued this reconquest eastward annexing the Syrian part of Mitanni²⁰⁸: Nuḥasse (EA 51) and Qatna (EA 55). Tušratta managed to stop the attacks (EA 17:30-35) and Ammištamru II (1360-1347), the king of Ugarit, wrote to Amenhotep III (1383-1345) because he feared being annexed by Šuppiluliuma I (EA 45). This first attack, the "Syrian War of 1 Year" in 1352 BCE, was the starting point of the voluminous correspondence found in El-Amarna.

The correspondence of the southern vassals has certain clear sequences and correlations. One point of reference is the figure of Lab'ayu, mayor of Shechem (EA 252-254), who clearly belongs to the earliest level of this correspondence²⁰⁹. As the hieratic docket on EA 254 is dated year 3[2 Amenhotep III], this letter written in 1352/1351 BCE matches exactly at the time of the war in Syria: *I [Lab'ayu] have obeyed the orders that the king wrote to me. Who am I that the king should lose his land on account of me? The fact is that I am a loyal servant of the king! I am not a rebel and I am not delinquent in duty. I have not held back my payments of tribute; I have not held back anything requested by my commissioner. He denounces me unjustly, but the king, my lord, does not examine my (alleged) act of rebellion. Moreover, my act of rebellion is this: when I entered Gezer, I kept on saying: Everything of mine the king takes, but where is what belongs to Milkilu? I know the actions of Milkilu against me! Moreover, the king wrote for my son. I did not know that my son was consorting with the 'Apiru. I herewith hand him over to Addaya [the commissioner]. Moreover, how, if the king wrote for my wife, how could I hold her back? How, if the king wrote to me: Put a bronze dagger into your heart and die, how could I not execute the order of the king?* (EA 254). Obviously Lab'ayu took the intervention by Šuppiluliuma to loot some Canaanite cities in his area and encourage them to secede. This local insurgency should be considered minor because at that time the Egyptians divided their partners in order of importance²¹⁰, first row (temple of Soleb): Ugarit, Kadesh, Cyprus, Hatti and Naharina (Mitanni); ranked second: Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Carchemish and Assyria. So, the mayors of Canaan, vassals of Egypt, came in third which explains the non-intervention of Egyptians. However the consequences of the Syrian War of 1 year in 1348/1347 BCE were much more serious.

‘Abdi-Aširta, the king of Amurru, who did not receive any support of Amenhotep III, preferred cooperating with Šuppiluliuma and paid him in ransoming the Canaanite kings of his area. As did Lab'ayu earlier, the war of Šuppiluliuma encouraged him to loot some Canaanite cities in his area and encourage them to secede. In a very pragmatic way, Amenhotep III refused to engage in an uncertain and costly war against the Hittite empire

²⁰⁶ J. FREU – Histoire du Mitanni
Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 72-90.

²⁰⁷ T. BRYCE – The Kingdom of the Hittites
Oxford 2005 Éd. Oxford University Press pp. 144-153.

²⁰⁸ J. FREU – Histoire politique du royaume d'Ugarit
Paris 2006 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 36-49.

²⁰⁹ W.L. MORAN – The Amarna Letters
London 1992 nEd. The Johns Hopkins University Press pp. XXXIV-XXXIX.

²¹⁰ J. ELAYI – Histoire de la Phénicie
Paris 2013 Éd. Perrin pp. 76-92.

If the letters of Canaanite mayors are silent on the situation in Palestine (this region not dependent on any Egyptian Commissioner), the Egyptian texts and their topographical lists confirm the existence of a vast area inhabited by the Shasu (Bedouins). The (big) cities conquered by Joshua appearing in the Amarna letters are those which remained occupied by the Canaanites, but the cities (whose existence has been confirmed by archaeology)²¹¹ which became entirely Israelites like: Hebron (el-Khalil), Arad (Tell Arad), Aroer (Khirbet Arair), Beer-sheba (Tell Sheba), Dan (Tell el-Qadi), Debir (Khirbet er-Rabud), Adullam (Khirbet esh-Sheikh Madhkur), Libnah (Tell Burna), Shiloh (Khirbet Seilum), Tirzah (Tell el-Farah), etc., are never mentioned in these letters. The marauding Habiru of Late Bronze Age Canaan, generally designating seditious/ factious at this time, have often been described in both social and linguistic terms as the precursors to the earliest Hebrews, but the pastoral-nomadic Shasu, another social group from the east, provides a more fitting background for Israel's origins²¹². Egyptians knew well the area of Syria-Palestine which they called Retenu until Thutmose III (1469-1418), then from Amenhotep II²¹³ (1420-1392): Upper Retenu (Palestine) and Lower Retenu²¹⁴ (Syria). From Thutmose II (1472-1469) appears the new term "Land of Shasu" instead of "Upper Retenu" which will be later exclusively used in the numerous topographical lists written under Amenhotep III²¹⁵ (1383-1345). A list of toponyms enumerates for example: Pella-foreign land (*p-h-r ḥ3st*), Shasu-foreign land (*š3-sw-w ḥ3st*), Qatna (*qd-d-j-n-3*), Gezer (*q-3-d-3-r*). However, Shasu's name refers to both the country and the people of Palestine. For example a list of four toponyms reads: Land of Shasu after Maat (*t3 š3-sw-w š3 m-'t-i*); Land of Shasu those of Yehua (*t3 š3-sw-w y-h-w3 w*); Land of Shasu showing respect to Bel (*t3 š3-sw t-w-r-j b-l*); Bait house of Anat (*b-3-i-ti b '[n-t]*). It is noteworthy that in his treaty²¹⁶ with Duppi-Tešub (1312-1280), King of Amurru, are mentioned "the Hapiri gods" by Muršili II (1322-1295), King of Hatti.

If Palestine has played no role in the events at that time, the kingdom of Hazor was a notable exception, in full accordance with the biblical account. This venerable kingdom of Canaan was stuck between Mitanni to northeast, Amurru to northwest and Palestine to the south. Depending on synchronisms, we know²¹⁷ that at the time of Artatama I (1390-1373) the Mitannian power has increased tax burden on its vassals. In these circumstances, the fact that the king of Hazor had wanted to increase his resources by partnering with Sisera, another ruler (near to Amurru) in the same situation, in order to loot Palestine, a defenseless country (Judges 5:8), is quite likely. In addition, the fact that Judge Barak decided to attack the powerful kingdom of Hazor (archeology confirms that Hazor was one of the most powerful city-state during the 14th century BCE)²¹⁸ and its Army General (Sisera) at the very moment when the Hittite empire triggered its formidable attack against the Mitanni and its Syrian kingdoms, his choice proved to be providential. Indeed, the military disorganization throughout all the region of Canaan (under Egyptian control) allowed the Hebrews to prevail easily over their mighty oppressors. God, who has the sense of humor, even chose a woman (Judges 4:9,22) to realize this stunning victory.

²¹¹ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible
Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

²¹² A. RAINEY – Shasu or Habiru : Who Were the Early Israelites ?
in: *Biblical Archaeological Society* n°34 (2008) pp. 51-55.

²¹³ J. SIMONS – Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia
Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 123-124, 130, 210.

²¹⁴ Upper Retenu (*r-ḫ-mw ḥ-r-ḫ*); Lower Retenu (*r-ḫ-mw ḫ-r-ḫ*).

²¹⁵ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 9-10, 17-33.

²¹⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 203-206.

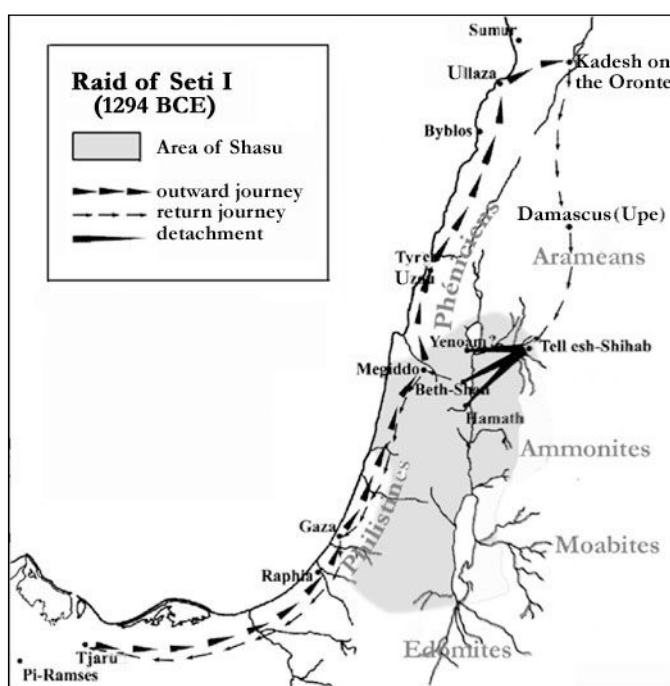
²¹⁷ J. FREU – Histoire du Mitanni
Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 83-84.

²¹⁸ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible
Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 21, 54, 64, 86-87, 148-150, 255-257, 319, 524-525, 564.

DATING THE BETH-SHEAN VICTORY (1294 BCE)

In the years following the Amarna period²¹⁹, the expansionist policies of Hatti and Assyria had led to the virtual eclipse of Mitanian independence. Of greater concern to Egypt, however, was the situation of Kadesh, the great trading centre of the Orontes Valley whose chiefs felt increasing pressure to ally with Hatti. In spite of peace treaties between the two nations, Hittite and Egyptian armies had clashed near Kadesh at some point during or after the reign of Tutankhamun (1336-1327). A new dynasty, the 19th, had a military background, and felt it was time to reassert the role of the king as war-leader. Initially Seti I (1294-1283) took the field against the Shasu, briefly returned Amurru (in 1294 BCE) to Egyptian control, and then engaged a Hittite army near Kadesh. However, Seti's successes (portrayed with emphasis on the wall of Karnak) were only preliminary skirmishes in which the two armies appraised the gathering storm: it was his son, Ramses II (1283-1216), who was destined to meet the armies of Muwatalli II of Hatti (1295-1275) in the climactic battle of Kadesh (in 1278 BCE) for control of the Orontes.

A careful reconstruction of the itinerary of Seti²²⁰ shows that the Tehenu (Libyans) and the Shasu (Bedouins) defeated were near Gaza (land of Philistines) and the fights against the Hittites in the Retenu, including military operations against the city of Kadesh and Amurru, took place in the north of Palestine. Upon his return, the troubles among local leaders that Seti punished took place around Beth-Shean²²¹, a Canaanite area also inhabited by the Hebrews. On the stelae of Seti describing his victories in Palestine, technical words used remain in line with his predecessors since ethnic groups are designated according to their geographical



location since Apiru are mainly some Amorites factious, Asiatics (*aamu*) are the inhabitants of Canaan and Shasu are the Bedouins in Palestine: *Year 1, 3rd month of the 3rd season, day 10 (... Seti) valiant leader of his army, valiant warrior in the very heart of the fray, a Bastet (lioness goddess of war) terrible in combat, penetrating into a mass of Asiatics and making them prostrate, crushing the princes of Retenu, reaching the (very) ends of him who transgresses against his way. He causes to retreat the princes of Kharu (Syria), all the boastfulness of whose mouth was (so) great. Every foreign country of the ends of the earth, their princes say: Where shall we go? They spend the night giving testimony in his name, saying: Behold it, behold it? in their hearts. It is the strength of his father Amon that decreed to him valor and victory. On this day one came to speak to his majesty, as follows: The wretched foe who is in the town of Hamath is gathering to himself many people, while he is seizing the town of Beth-Shean. Then there will be an alliance with them of Pehal (Pella). He does not permit the Prince of Rebob to go outside. Thereupon his*

²¹⁹ B. MANLEY – Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypte
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 92-93.

²²⁰ A. DEGRÈVE – La campagne asiatique de l'an 1 de Séthi I^{er}
in: *Revue d'égyptologie* 57 (2006) pp. 47-64.

²²¹ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 498-504.

majesty sent the first army of Amon, (named) "Mighty of Bows," to the town of Hamath, the first army of the Re, (named) "Plentiful of Valor," to the town of Beth-Shean, and the first army of Seth, (named) "Strong of Bows," to the town of Yenoam. Campaign in Djahi: Year 1 of the Renaissance (...) Then one came to say to his majesty: The foe belonging to the Shasu are plotting rebellion. Their tribal chiefs are gathered in one place, waiting on the mountain ranges of Kharu (...) His majesty kills them all at one time, and leaves no heirs among them. He who is spared by his hand is a living prisoner, carried off to Egypt (...) The desolation which the mighty arm of Pharaoh -life, prosperity, health!- made among the foe belonging to the Shasu from the fortress of Sile (Tjaru) to the Canaan. His majesty prevailed over them like a fierce lion. They were made into corpses throughout their valleys, stretched out in their (own) blood, like that which has never been (...) Lebanon. Cutting down [cedar for] the great barque upon the river, "Amon-User-bet," as well as for the great flagpoles of Amon (...) The return of his majesty from Upper Retenu, having extended the frontiers of Egypt. The plunder which his majesty carried off from these Shasu, whom his majesty himself captured in the year 1 of the Renaissance. Campaign in Upper Retenu: The going up which Pharaoh -life, prosperity, health!- made to desolate the land of Kadesh and the land of Amurru (...) Presentation of tribute by the good god to his father Amon-Re, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, at his return from the country of Hatti, having annihilated the rebellious countries and crushed the Asiatics in their places... The great princes of the wretched Retenu, whom his majesty carried off by his victories from the country of Hatti, to fill the workhouse of his father Amon-Re (...) On this day (...): The Apiru of Mount Yarmuta, with Teyer..., have arisen in attack upon the Asiatics of Rehem. Then his majesty said: How can these wretched Asiatics think of taking their arms for further disorder?... Then his majesty commanded a certain number of people from his infantry and his numerous chariotry that their faces turn back to the foreign country Djahi²²². These stories about "Seti's great victories" are more the describing about a police operation to quell a rebellion in northern Palestine than a war between two countries²²³. However, the fact that the Hittite empire did not react against the annexation of Amurru, its vassal kingdom, is hard to explain because on his death, Muṣili II (1322-1295) left to his son and successor Muwatalli II (1295-1275) a relatively stable kingdom, in addition it was fortunate for Seti that the Hittites did not retaliate promptly²²⁴.

The treaty between Tudhaliya IV and Šaušgamuwa²²⁵ confirms Seti's victory, which "was due to a betrayal of the men of Amurru(!)": *[Earlier] the land of Amurru had not been defeated by the force of arms of Hatti. When [Aṣiru came] to the (great-)grandfather of My Majesty in Hatti, the lands of Amurru were still [hostile]. They [were] subjects of the King of Hurri (Mitanni). Aṣiru accordingly gave him (Šuppiluliuma) his allegiance, although he did [not] defeat him by force of arms. And Aṣiru, your (great-great-)grandfather, protected Šuppiluliuma as overlord, and he protected Hatti. Later he also protected Muṣili as overlord, and he protected Hatti. In no way did he commit an offense against Hatti. But when Muwatalli, uncle of My Majesty, became King, the men of Amurru committed an offense against him, informing him as follows: We were voluntary subjects. Now we are no longer your subjects. And they went over to the King of Egypt. Then My Majesty's uncle Muwatalli and the King of Egypt fought over the men of Amurru. Muwatalli defeated him, destroyed the land of Amurru by force of arms, and subjugated it. And he made Šapili king in the land of Amurru. But when Muwatalli, the uncle of My Majesty, died, the father of My Majesty, Hattušili, became King. He deposed Šapili and made Bentešina, your father, king in the land of Amurru. He protected the father of My Majesty, and he protected Hatti. In no way did he commit an offense against Hatti.* Thus, in 1295/1294 BCE²²⁶ the men of Amurru voluntarily abandoned the Hatti for going over to the King of Egypt!

²²² J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
 Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 253-255.

²²³ W.J. MURNANE - The Road to Kadesh in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* n°42 (1990) pp. 39-50.

²²⁴ T. BRYCE - The Kingdom of the Hittites
 Oxford 2005 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 221, 228-229.

²²⁵ G. BECKMAN - Hittite Diplomatic Texts
 Atlanta 1999 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 103-105.

²²⁶ Muwatalli's accession in 1295/1294 BCE coincide with year 1 of Seti I in 1294 BCE.

Without the biblical account which places these events at the beginning of the judicature of Gideon (1299-1259), this change of alliance remains inexplicable²²⁷. The situation in Palestine at this time is pictured as anarchic, disorders being caused by the Midianites, the Amalekites (Libyans) near Gaza and Orientals near Beth-Shean (Judges 6:1-6,33) in the plain of Jezreel (Joshua 17:16). The term "Oriental" meant mostly Syrians (Genesis 25:6,20). Those of this period are named Sidonians, unto the entrance of Hamath (Judges 3:3), an area controlled by the Kingdom of Amurru. Gideon, whose name means "one who cuts off", put an end to this disorder when he slaughtered 135,000 Orientals near Beth-Shean (Judges 8:10). The victory of Gideon had to be memorable because Eusebius reports the writings of Porphyry of Tyre (234-305), who was a Neoplatonic philosopher born in Tyre, and above all an opponent to Christianity who challenged the biblical text: *the historian of this subject is Sanchuniathon, an author of great antiquity, and older, as they say, than the Trojan times [c. 1200 BCE], one whom they testify to have been approved for the accuracy and truth of his Phoenician History. Philo of Byblos, not the Hebrew, translated his whole work from the Phoenician language into the Greek, and published it*²²⁸. The author in our own day of the compilation against us mentions these things in the 4th book of his treatise *Against the Christians*, where he bears the following testimony to Sanchuniathon, word for word: *Of the affairs of the Jews the truest history, because the most in accordance with their places and names, is that of Sanchuniathon of Beirut, who received the records from Hierombalus (Jerubbaal) the priest of the god Ieiô (Yehua); he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses, as is shown by the successions of the kings of Phoenicia. And Sanchuniathon, who made a complete collection of ancient history from the records in the various cities and from the registers in the temples, and wrote in the Phoenician language* (Praeparatio Evangelica I:9:20-22). Several part of Porphyry's narrative are correct: 1) the kings of Beirut²²⁹ were privileged witnesses of the attack against the kingdom of Amurru; 2) the official of Yehua who won a great victory near Beth-Shean in 1299 BCE (he became afterwards the ruler of the people) was actually called Jerubbaal (Judges 6:32; 7:1) or Hierombal in Greek. Thus this crushing defeat could explain the shifting alliances of the Amurru and also why Seti I could awarded the pacification of the region.

At that time the inhabitants of Palestine (Hebrews, Syrians and Canaanites) are all called Shasu²³⁰. The description of these Shasu around 1200 BCE shows the Egyptian concept (negative) on this motley group: *He takes what is left and joined the [ranks of] miserable ones. He mingles with the the tribes of Shasu and disguises himself as Asiatic (...) Narrow gorge is infested with Shasu hiding in bushes, some of them are 4 or 5 cubits from head to foot, fierce face, their heart is not soft and they do not lend an ear to the blandishments*²³¹. The Shasu were perceived as perpetual seditious. On stelae, attributed to Ramses II, for example, one reads: *He who has stripped Asiatic kings in their country: he ruined the heritage of Shasu's country* (Stele of the Shardanes); *Who reduced to nothing the rebellious nations (...) has been [bring their tribute to] Shasu's country* (Stele V); *[Who pushed back] Asiatics, who captured [the people of] Shasu's country* (Stele IX). However, as Shasu from these stelae are associated with the Hittites (enemies of Egypt) they were rather Syrians than Hebrews, especially as on a lintel in Tell er-Ratabi shows Ramses II in the process of cutting down a Syrian (identifiable by his hair and his costume).

²²⁷ Even the Mitanni, an ally of Egypt, was weak since it collapsed in 1264 BCE after the attack of Assyria.

²²⁸ This Phoenician History was translated into Greek from the Phoenician by Philo of Byblos (64-141).

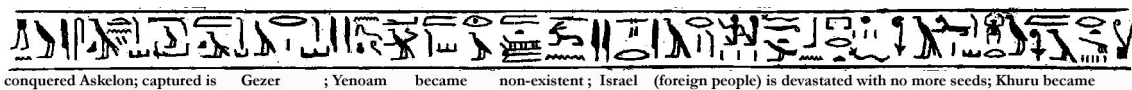
²²⁹ Only two kings of Beirut are known: Yapah-Hadda (1355-1345) and Ammunira (1345-1335). Around 200 BCE Menander of Ephesus translated the annals of Tyre into Greek (quoted by Flavius Josephus). After the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE these annals disappeared. In the same way, the archives of Beirut disappeared in 140 BCE when the city was destroyed by Diodotus Tryphon. Annals in Phoenician should exist at that time because the handwriting was used by Gideon (Judges 8:13-14).

²³⁰ T.E. LEVY, R.B. ADAMS & A. MUNIZ - Archaeology and the Shasu Nomads in: Le-David Maskil, Ed. Eisenbrauns 2004 pp. 63-89.

²³¹ Pap. Anastasi I:20,3-4; I:23,7-8. Some giant Shasu (between 2 m and 2.50 m!) correspond to the Anakim living in the southwest of Palestine (Numbers 13:22-33).

DATING THE ISRAEL STELA (1211 BCE)

The Israel Stela, dated III Shemu 3 year 5 of Merenptah (20 April 1211 BCE), is the oldest known inscription mentioning the people "Israel", it relates the following events (line 27): *[All] Princes are prostrate, saying: "Shalam (Peace)". Not one lifts up his head among the Nine Bows. Now that Tehenu (Libya) has come to ruin, Hatti is pacified; The Canaan has been plundered into every sort of woe: Askelon has been overcome; Gezer has been captured; Yenoam is made non-existent. Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer; Hurru (Khor) is become a widow because of Egypt. All lands combined, they are at peace; Whoever roams about gets subdued by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Merenptah*²³². Merenptah after having devastated Libya (first goal of his expedition) was delighted that Israel, mentioned as a people and not as a country, was laid waste and has no more any offsprings, that is to say any rulers. The pictogram of the word "seed" is composed of 3 grains so that the one of the inscription has only 1 and means "offspring/ posterity"²³³ (only this latter sense fits the context).



Although the text of Merenptah is suggesting an intervention in Palestine, historical context shows that this Pharaoh led only two campaigns (in years 4 and 5 of his reign), first of all in order to stop the Libyan invasion²³⁴, and parallel some police operations to quell a Nubian insurgency and few rebel cities in the south of Canaan. Several clues prove that Merenptah did not go into Palestine: only few cities in southern Canaan (Askelon, Gezer) are mentioned; the name Palestine (Upper Retenu) does not appear in the stela of Israel; the pharaoh was delighted that Israel was laid waste but he never said he had caused it which he would certainly have done if that had been the case because of his bragging. When Merenptah said: *The Canaan has been plundered*, he just meant: "*Gaza area*" *has been plundered*²³⁵.

The phrase "Israel is devastated, his descendants are no longer" is bewildering and raises three questions: 1) Is this description taken from real events or is it propaganda? 2) Why the term "Israel" is it used instead of the usual "Palestine (Upper Retenu)"? 3) Why the cause of the devastation of Israel is not indicated? The campaign in southern Palestine had to be real for the following reasons: it is well dated and localized, in addition, there is a very realistic representation of the "taking" of Ashkelon on a wall in Karnak²³⁶. However, although Seti describe it as an overwhelming victory, it was in fact a police operation (and not a battle) to conduct an eviction, because men (and also some women!) are unarmed and were pleading Egyptian soldiers to be spared (without fighting). At that time the inhabitants of Ashkelon should be mainly Philistines. According to the biblical text (Judges 1:1-19), the Israelites had invaded the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron with (in 1463 BCE), but could not conquer them because of the iron tanks of Philistines, these cities therefore remained under Philistine command. The Amarna letters show that their mayors were vassals of Egypt. Widya (Indo-Aryan name), for example, the mayor of Askelon, constantly reminds in his letters²³⁷ his allegiance to King Amenhotep IV.

²³² W.K. SIMPSON – The Literature of Ancient Egypt
Cairo 2005 Ed. Yale University Press pp. 356-360.

²³³ R.O. FAULKNER – A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian
Oxford 2002, Ed. Griffith Institute p. 91.

²³⁴ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 559-574.

²³⁵ H.J. KATZENSTEIN - Gaza in the Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom
in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 102:1 (1982) pp. 111-113.

²³⁶ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday p. 235.

²³⁷ W.L. MORAN – Les lettres d'El-Amarna
in: *Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient* 13 (Cerf 1987) pp. 543-547.

Hori's satirical letter (*Papyrus Anastasi I*)²³⁸ confirms important points: the region of Canaan was reduced to the area around Gaza at that time²³⁹; the land of Israel had no contact with Egypt except with the tribe of Asher to the East of the city of Acco which was inhabited by the fearsome Shasu led by the famous Chief Qazardi²⁴⁰. This letter is dated during Sety II's reign (1207-1202) by Gardiner on paleographic grounds, in addition, the accurate topography given by Hori of the pass in a region which has been identified at el-Ahwat's area corresponds to a short-lived site dating between 1220-1160 BCE²⁴¹ and the virtual campaign in Syria he described is inspired from those of Sety I (same cities) and Menerptah (same enemies: Libyans associated with Sherden belonging to Sea Peoples)²⁴². Hori describes a dangerous area infested with Shasu which fits accurately to the tribe of Asher (Joshua 17:7-11; 19:24-31): *Thou hast not gone to the land of Hatti, thou hast not seen the land of Upi (Damascus area). Khedem (Lebanon?), thou knowest [not] its nature, nor Yegdy either. What is it like, the Simyra of Sessi (nickname of Ramses II) —life, prosperity, health!? On which side of it is the city of Aleppo? (19:1) What is its stream like? Thou hast not gone forth to Kadesh [on Orontes] and Tubikhi. Thou hast not gone to the region of the Shasu with the bowmen of the army. Thou hast [not] trodden the road to the Magur, where the sky is darkened by day and it is overgrown with cypresses and oaks and cedars which reach the heavens. Lions are more numerous than leopards or bears, (and it is) surrounded by Shasu on (every) side of it. Thou hast not climbed the mountain of Shawe²⁴³, barefoot, thy hands laid upon [thy bow] (...) Thou awakest, (20:1) for it is the hour of starting in the sickly night. Thou art alone for the harnessing; no brother comes for a brother. The sneak-thieves have entered into [the] camp, the horse is untied, the ... has been lost in the night, and thy clothes have been stolen. Thy groom awoke in the night, saw what he had done, and took what was left. He has entered among those who are wicked, he has mingled with the Shasu tribes, and he has made himself into the likeness of an Asiatic (aamu). The foe had come to raid furtively and found thee inert. When thou awakest, thou findest no trace of them, and they have carried off thy property. (Thus) thou art become a fully equipped mahir, as thou fillest thy ear (...) Pray, teach me about the appearance of Qiye, let me know Rehob, explain Beth-Shan and Tirqa-El. The stream of (23:1) Jordan, how is it crossed? Let me know the way to pass Megiddo, which is above it. Thou art a mahir, experienced in deeds of heroism. A mahir such as thou art should be found (able) to stride at the head of an army! O maryanu, forward to shoot! Behold, the ambushade is in a ravine 2000 cubits deep, filled with boulders and pebbles. Thou makest a detour, as thou graspest the bow. Thou makest a feint to thy left, that thou mightest make the chiefs to see, (but) their eyes are good and thy hand falters. "Abpaata kamô' ir, mahir ne'am!" (Thus) thou makest a name for every mahir, officers of Egypt! Thy name becomes like (that of) Qazardi, the Chief of Asher, when the bear found him in the balsam tree. The narrow valley is dangerous with the Shasu, hidden under the bushes. Some of them are of 4 or 5 cubits (from) their noses to the heel, and fierce of face. Their hearts are not mild, and they do not listen to wheedling. Thou art alone; there is no messenger with thee, no army host behind thee. Qazardi²⁴⁴, the "famous Chief of Asher", is unknown but could look like Gideon who gathered an army*

²³⁸ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 475-477.

²³⁹ It reads: (27:1) [let me relate to] thee the [foreign countries] of the end of the land of the Canaan. Thou answerest me neither good nor evil; thou returnest me no report. Come, let [me] tell thee many things as far as the Fortress of the "Ways [of Horus]". I begin for thee with the "Dwelling of Sessi —life, prosperity, health!" Thou hast not trodden it at all. Thou hast not eaten the fish of ... ; thou hast not bathed in it. Pray, let me recall to thee Husayin —where is its fortress? Come now to the region of Uto of Sessi —life, prosperity, health!— in his stronghold of User-maat-Re —life, prosperity, health!— and Seba-El, and Ibsaqab (under Seti I). Let me tell thee the nature of Aiyamin. Thou knowest not its rules. Nekhes and Hebrat, thou hast not seen them since thy birth. O mahir, where are they? Raphia —what is its wall like? How many iters ("10 km") march is it as far as Gaza? Answer quickly! Make me a report, that I may call thee mahir and boast to others of thy name maryanu —so shall I speak to them.

²⁴⁰ Y. AHARONI — The Land of the Bible
Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 180-185.

²⁴¹ S. BAR, D. KAHN, J.J. SHIRLEY — Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature
Leiden 2011 Ed. Brill pp. 348-350.

²⁴² It reads: O alert scribe, understanding of heart, who is not ignorant at all, (17:3) torch in the darkness at the head of the troops — and it gives light to them! Thou art sent on an mission to Djaby (Phoenicia) at the head of the victorious army, to crush those rebels called Ne[h]arin. The bowmen of the army which is before thee amount to 1900; the Sherden 520, the Qebek 1600, the Meshwesh [100?], and the Negroes 880; total 5000 in all, not counting their officers.

²⁴³ The Shawe (Sawa) referred to by Tiglath-Pileser III as a mountain bordering on Mount Lebanon region.

²⁴⁴ The name Qazardi, written q-3-d-3-j-r-d-j-y and pronounced Qadjaildiye, could be Hebrew קצרדי ("Short is my hand").

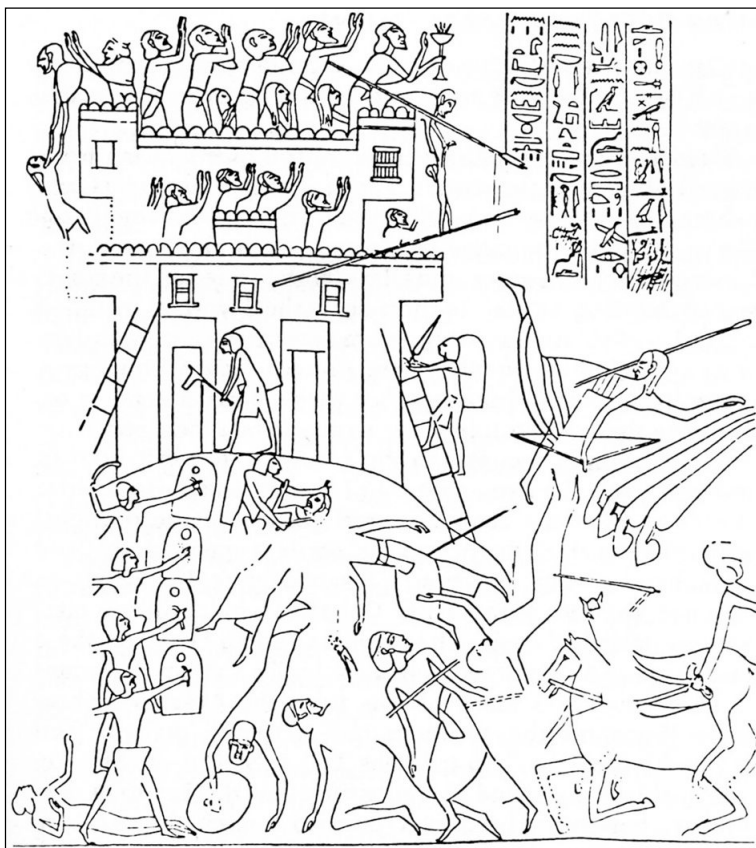
drawn from several tribes which were dwelling in Asher's area (Judges 6:33-40). Gideon's exploits (in 1299 BCE) had to be famous since Sanchuniaton, a Phoenician writer, knew them. It is noteworthy that Hori's satirical letter was copied with a lot of variations and many proper names have been distorted²⁴⁵.



²⁴⁵ C. TANTAOUI – La lettre satirique d'Hori, le papyrus Anastasi I et les textes parallèles, Volume II Paris 1987 Thèse de doctorat en égyptologie Paris 3, pp 272-408.

The determination of the end of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1185 BCE) in Canaan proper from archaeological data is not an easy task. The land underwent a complicated cultural process with diverse consequent developments at various sites. Some important Canaanite cities: Megiddo (Stratum VIIB), Beth-Shean (Stratum VII), Gezer (Stratum XV), Lachish (Stratum VII), Ashdod (Stratum XIV) were totally destroyed (likely by Sea Peoples settlement), the largest and most influential of which was Hazor. This wave of destructions corresponding with the termination of Egyptian presence in Canaan²⁴⁶.

Although the city of Ashkelon was mainly populated by former Philistines and was headed by a mayor vassal of Egypt, she had a significant Israelite population (Judges 14:19; 1Samuel 6:17, 2Samuel 1:20). The clothes of the inhabitants of Ashkelon (opposite drawing) are of Canaanite type, which implies they are rather Canaanites or Israelites. One can likely to conclude that Merenptah to support his vassal mayor, expelled the Israelite residents of Ashkelon, which so returned as a fully Philistine city. The epoch for intervention in southern Palestine was well chosen because of serious disorders had arisen in Israel after the death of Judge Jair, who was without a successor for 18 years (Judges 10:3-13). Jair being dead after 22 years of reign, his 23rd year should have started at 1 Nisan or 21 April 1211 BCE²⁴⁷. The correspondence of dates is excellent between the stele of Israel, wherein Pharaoh Merenptah is pleased that the people of Israel has no more leaders, and the biblical account which deplores the distress in Israel caused by oppression of the Philistines and the Ammonites, which coincided with the death of Judge Jair. Merenptah has therefore timely benefited from circumstances (death of the Israelite leader who is not replaced) to regain control of Philistia.



The name "Israel" appears in the stele of Israel instead of "Palestine" (Upper Retenu) because it means a political entity "Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer" and not a geographical entity, besides the stele of Merenptah mentions a people, not a land. The word "Upper Retenu" has always been used (after 1500 BCE) by the Egyptians to designate Palestine, even by Ramses III (1192-1161). The Israelites became a political entity (with a king and a Chancery) only from Gideon who refused to be king (Judges 8:22-23; 9:22) but not his son Abimelech (1259-1256). In fact, the first legitimate king of Israel was Saul (1Samuel 8:5-9:16), who reigned over the period 1097-1057. The land of Israel was

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²⁴⁶ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 287.

²⁴⁷ The spring equinox is dated 1st April -1210* (1211 BCE), April 21 corresponds to the appearance of the 1st crescent moon after that date. See: http://www.imcce.fr/fr/grandpublic/phenomenes/phases_lune/index.php

regarded by the Egyptians primarily as a geographical entity over the period 1500-1100 BCE because of the absence of an official king. The biblical text itself replaces the phrase "the land of Canaan" by "the land" (after 1500 BCE), then "the land of Israel" from King Saul (1Samuel 13:1,19) and the inhabitants are merely called "the sons of Israel". This distinction is important, for example the geographical entity that is "Naharine" (Mesopotamia) became a political entity "Mitanni" with the appearance of its first king Kirta (1500-1485). Thus, from Thutmose III (1472-1418), Egyptian topographical lists²⁴⁸ include both Naharine (*n-h-r-j-n*) and Mitanni (*m-t-n*). Chronological summary:

Period	Land name	Inhabitants name	Capital	Kingdom name
2000-1750 BCE	Retenu	Aamu	Hazor	-
1750-1500 BCE	Retenu	Aamu	Hazor	Hyksos dynasties
1500-1350 BCE	Upper Retenu	Shasu	[Hazor]	-
1350-1200 BCE	Upper Retenu	Shasu	[Shechem]	-
1200-1050 BCE	Upper Retenu	Shasu	[Shechem]	House of Israel
1050-900 BCE	(Israel)	(Israelites)	Jerusalem	House of David
900-750 BCE	Samaria/ Judea	Samarians/ Judeans	Samaria	House of Omri

This summary table confirms the chronology from the Bible: During the period 1750-1500 BCE the Israelites were in Egypt (Hyksos dynasties). When the Israelites left Egypt for Palestine Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa died dramatically, likewise Iahmes Sapaïr his eldest son. Forty years later, Hazor is burned and Palestine is occupied by the Shasu (Bedouins) which appeared suddenly around 1500 BCE (after the conquest of Canaan). The political entity of Israel appeared around 1200 BCE with Abimelech its first king. The period following the wave of destruction by the Sea Peoples (in 1188 BCE) is called the "dark ages" because there are no documents in this period 1150-850 BCE, except in the Shoshenq I's list (980-959) appears the area called "[Hig]hlan[ds] of David"²⁴⁹.

The late great Israeli archaeologist Yohanan Aharoni and, more recently²⁵⁰, the American archaeologist Aaron Burke have observed that the Bible describes the cities of Canaan as being strongly fortified. This was true at the end of the Middle Bronze Age (about 1550 BCE), but it was not true at the end of the Late Ancient Bronze Age (1200 BCE), when the prevailing view dates the ethnogenesis of Biblical Israel. The German scholars cite Israeli scholar Rivka Gonen as noting that at the end of the Late Bronze Age: *the Canaanite towns were frequently unfortified and therefore did not fit the Biblical descriptions well*. Even Tel Aviv University archaeologist Israel Finkelstein, known largely for his minimalist views, has suggested, in the words of the German scholars: *that the Biblical tradition likely contains vague memories of the expulsion of the (West Semitic) Hyksos*.

Because of frequent chronological imprecisions and because of its inability to identify the ethnicity of inhabitants, archeology can not decide, for example, between the conquest of Canaan by Joshua and the military campaign of Thutmose III in Palestine²⁵¹. Without historical accounts, it is impossible to write history. The arrival of the Israelites in Palestine was a major event in history which has been commented on by many Greek and Roman historians²⁵². Two important points emerge among these accounts:

²⁴⁸ J. SIMONS – Handbook for the Study of the Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 207-210.

²⁴⁹ K.A. KITCHEN - On the Reliability of the Old Testament Cambridge 2003 Ed. W.B. Eerdmans p. 615.

²⁵⁰ H. SHANKS - When Did Ancient Israel Begin? in: Ancient Israel in Egypt and the Exodus (Biblical Archaeology Society 2012) pp. 36-37.

²⁵¹ E. JUNKKAALA -Three Conquests of Canaan. A Comparative Study of Two Egyptian Military Campaigns and Joshua 10-12 in the Light of Recent Archaeological Evidence. Ed. Abo Akademi University Press (2006) pp. 303-312.

²⁵² M. STERN - Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism Jerusalem 1976 Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. 26-34.

1. The Hebrew Bedouins (*aamu*) lived in Egypt (whom rulers were actually called Hyksos) before emigrating to Palestine (known afterward as Shasu "Bedouins") under the leadership of Moses, who is frequently associated with two famous characters: Danaus and Cadmus that after leaving Egypt emigrated to Greece.
 2. This major event, usually located around 1500 BCE, coincided with the invention of the alphabet by Cadmus, a Phoenician. The name Cadmus is not Greek but means "East" or "aforetime" in Old Canaanite (*qadmu*), it was used to refer Lebanon in the Story of Sinuhe (§§ 51, 217). Homer (c. 850 BCE), mentioned "the sons of Cadmus gathered in great numbers" (Iliad IV:388) and Hesiod (c. 700 BCE) spoke about "the land of Cadmus" (Works and Days §4).
- **Herodotus** (c. 450 BCE), a Greek historian: *I believe that Melampus learned the worship of Dionysus chiefly from Cadmus of Tyre and those who came with Cadmus from Phoenicia to the land now called Boeotia (...) When I asked why Perseus appeared only to them, and why, unlike all other Egyptians, they celebrate games, they told me that Perseus was by lineage of their city; for Danaus and Lynceus, who travelled to Greece, were of Khemmis; and they traced descent from these down to Perseus (...) Now the Dionysus who was called the son of Semele, daughter of Cadmus, was about 1600 years before my time (...) because the temple of Athena in Lindus is said to have been founded by the daughters of Danaus, when they landed there in their flight from the sons of Egyptus (...) These Phoenicians who came with Cadmus and of whom the Gephyraeans were a part brought with them to Hellas, among many other kinds of learning, the alphabet, which had been unknown before this, I think, to the Greeks. As time went on the sound and the form of the letters were changed. At this time the Greeks who were settled around them were for the most part Ionians, and after being taught the letters by the Phoenicians, they used them with a few changes of form. In so doing, they gave to these characters the name of Phoenician, as was quite fair seeing that the Phoenicians had brought them into Greece. The Ionians have also from ancient times called sheets of papyrus skins, since they formerly used the skins of sheep and goats due to the lack of papyrus. Even to this day there are many foreigners who write on such skins. I have myself seen Cadmean writing in the temple of Ismenian Apollo at Thebes of Boeotia engraved on certain tripods and for the most part looking like Ionians letters. On one of the tripods there is this inscription: Amphitryon dedicated me from the spoils of Teleboae. This would date from about the time of Laius the son of Labdacus, grandson of Polydorus and great-grandson of Cadmus (The Histories II:49,91,145,182; V:58-59).*
- **Hecataeus of Abdera** (315-305 BCE), a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher: *When in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt, the common people ascribed their troubles to the workings of a divine agency; for indeed with many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practising different rites of religion and sacrifice, their own traditional observances in honour of the gods had fallen into disuse. Hence the natives of the land surmised that unless they removed the foreigners, their troubles would never be resolved. At once, therefore, the aliens were driven from the country, and the most outstanding and active among them banded together and, as some say, were cast ashore in Greece and certain other regions; their leaders were notable men, chief among them being Danaus and Cadmus. But the greater number were driven into what is now called Judaea, which is not far distant from Egypt and was at that time utterly uninhabited. The colony was headed by a man called Moses, outstanding both for his wisdom and for his courage. On taking possession of the land he founded, besides other cities, one that is now the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual, drew up their laws and ordered their political institutions. He also divided them into twelve tribes, since this is regarded as the most perfect number and corresponds to the number of months that make up a year. But he had no images whatsoever of the gods made for them, being of the opinion that God is not in human form; rather the Heaven that surrounds the earth is alone divine, and rules the universe. The sacrifices that he established differ from those of other nations, as does their way of living, for as a result of their own expulsion from*

Egypt he introduced an unsocial and intolerant mode of life. He picked out the men of most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire nation, and appointed them priests; and he ordained that they should occupy themselves with the temple and the honours and sacrifices offered to their God. These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Jews never have a king, and authority over the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. They call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts as a messenger to them of God's commandments. It is he, we are told, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them. And at the end of their laws there is even appended the statement: "These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares unto the Jews." Their lawgiver was careful also to make provision for warfare, and required the young men to cultivate manliness, steadfastness, and, generally, the endurance of every hardship. He led out military expeditions against the neighbouring tribes, and after annexing much land apportioned it out, assigning equal allotments to private citizens and greater ones to the priests, in order that they, by virtue of receiving more ample revenues, might be undistracted and apply themselves continually to the worship of God. The common citizens were forbidden to sell their individual plots, lest there be some who for their own advantage should buy them up, and by oppressing the poorer classes bring on a scarcity of manpower. He required those who dwelt in the land to rear their children, and since offspring could be cared for at little cost, the Jews were from the start a populous nation. As to marriage and the burial of the dead, he saw to it that their customs should differ widely from those of other men.

- **Manetho** (c. 280 BCE), an Egyptian historian and priest: *There was a king of ours whose name was Tutimaëus. Under him it came to pass, I know not how, that God was averse to us, and there came, after a surprising manner, men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts, and had boldness enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdued it by force, yet without our hazarding a battle with them. So when they had gotten those that governed us under their power, they afterwards burnt down our cities, and demolished the temples of the gods, and used all the inhabitants after a most barbarous manner; nay, some they slew, and led their children and their wives into slavery. At length they made one of themselves king, whose name was Salatis; he also lived at Memphis, and made both the upper and lower regions pay tribute, and left garrisons in places that were the most proper for them. He chiefly aimed to secure the eastern parts, as fore-seeing that the Assyrians, who had then the greatest power, would be desirous of that kingdom, and invade them; and as he found in the Saïte Nomos, [Sethroïte,] a city very proper for this purpose, and which lay upon the Bubastic channel, but with regard to a certain theologic notion was called Avaris, this he rebuilt, and made very strong by the walls he built about it, and by a most numerous garrison of 240,000 armed men whom he put into it to keep it. Thither Salatis came in summer time, partly to gather his corn, and pay his soldiers their wages, and partly to exercise his armed men, and thereby to terrify foreigners. When this man had reigned 19 years, after him reigned another, whose name was Bnon, for 44 years; after him reigned another, called Apachnas, 36 years and 7 months; after him Apophis reigned 61 years, and then Jannas 50 years and 1 month; after all these reigned Assis 49 years and 2 months. And these 6 were the first rulers among them, who were all along making war with the Egyptians, and were very desirous gradually to destroy them to the very roots. This whole nation was styled Hyksos, that is, Shepherd-kings: for the first syllable Hyk, according to the sacred dialect, denotes a king, as is sos a shepherd; but this according to the ordinary dialect; and of these is compounded Hyksos: but some say that these people were Arabians. These people, whom we have before named kings, and called shepherds also, and their descendants, kept possession of Egypt 511 years. That the kings of Thebais and the other parts of Egypt made an insurrection against the shepherds, and that there a terrible and long war was made between them. That under a king, whose name was Mispbragmuthosis, the shepherds were subdued by him, and were indeed driven out of other parts of Egypt, but were shut up in a place that contained 10,000 acres; this place was named Avaris. That the shepherds built a wall round all this place, which was a large and a strong*

wall, and this in order to keep all their possessions and their prey within a place of strength, but that Thummosis the son of Mispbragmuthosis made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with 480,000 men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, whithersoever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than 240,000, and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia, they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this great number of men, and called it Jerusalem. That this nation, thus called Shepherds, were also called Captives, in their sacred books. When this people or shepherds were gone out of Egypt to Jerusalem, Tethmosis the king of Egypt [Ahmose], who drove them out, reigned afterward 25 years and 4 months [1530-1505], and then died [...] how this namesake of his told him that he might see the gods, if he would clear the whole country of the lepers and of the other impure people; that the king was pleased with this injunction, and got together all that had any defect in their bodies out of Egypt; and that their number was 80,000; whom he sent to those quarries which are on the east side of the Nile, that they might work in them, and might be separated from the rest of the Egyptians. There were some of the learned priests that were polluted with the leprosy; but that still this Amenophis, the wise man and the prophet, was afraid that the gods would be angry at him and at the king, if there should appear to have been violence offered them; who also added this further, [out of his sagacity about futurities,] that certain people would come to the assistance of these polluted wretches, and would conquer Egypt, and keep it in their possession thirteen years; that, however, he durst not tell the king of these things, but that he left a writing behind him about all those matters, and then slew himself, which made the king disconsolate. After those that were sent to work in the quarries had continued in that miserable state for a long while, the king was desired that he would set apart the city Avaris, which was then left desolate of the shepherds, for their habitation and protection; which desire he granted them. Now this city, according to the ancient theology, was Typho's city. But when these men were gotten into it, and found the place fit for a revolt, they appointed themselves a ruler out of the priests of Heliopolis, whose name was Osarsiph, and they took their oaths that they would be obedient to him in all things. He then, in the first place, made this law for them, That they should neither worship the Egyptian gods, nor should abstain from any one of those sacred animals which they have in the highest esteem, but kill and destroy them all; that they should join themselves to nobody but to those that were of this confederacy. When he had made such laws as these, and many more such as were mainly opposite to the customs of the Egyptians, he gave order that they should use the multitude of the hands they had in building walls about their City, and make themselves ready for a war with king Amenophis, while he did himself take into his friendship the other priests, and those that were polluted with them, and sent ambassadors to those shepherds who had been driven out of the land by Tethmosis [Ahmosis] to the city called Jerusalem; whereby he informed them of his own affairs, and of the state of those others that had been treated after such an ignominious manner, and desired that they would come with one consent to his assistance in this war against Egypt (...) But for the people of Jerusalem, when they came down together with the polluted Egyptians, they treated the men in such a barbarous manner, that those who saw how they subdued the aforementioned country, and the horrid wickedness they were guilty of, thought it a most dreadful thing; for they did not only set the cities and villages on fire but were not satisfied till they had been guilty of sacrilege, and destroyed the images of the gods, and used them in roasting those sacred animals that used to be worshipped, and forced the priests and prophets to be the executioners and murderers of those animals, and then ejected them naked out of the country. It was also reported that the priest, who ordained their polity and their laws, was by birth of Heliopolis, and his name Osarsiph, from Osiris, who was the god of Heliopolis; but that when he was gone over to these people, his name was changed, and he was called Moses. After this, Amenophis returned back from Ethiopia with a great army, as did his son Ahampses with another army also, and that both of them joined battle with the shepherds and the polluted people, and beat them, and slew a great many of them, and pursued them

to the bounds of Syria (Against Apion I:75-91, 237-266).

- **Marble of Paros**²⁵³ (written in 264 BCE): *From when Cadmus the son of Agenor came to Thebes [... and] built the Cadmeia, 1255 years (1519 BCE). From when [the first fifty-oared] ship [prepared by Danaus] sailed from Egypt to Greece (...) 1247 years (1511 BCE).*
- **Greek inscription** (dated 234 BCE): *The inhabitants of these [Balearic] islands were the Canaanites fleeing from the face of Joshua the son of Nun (Paschal Chronicle dated 630)*²⁵⁴.
- **Demetrius the Chronograph** (c. 220 BCE), a Jewish chronicler: *Since Adam [in 5307 BCE] until the birth of Abraham 3334 years (1973 BCE), until the entry of Jacob into Egypt 3624 years (1683 BCE), until the Exodus of Moses 3839 years (1468 BCE)* (Stomata I:21, 141; Preparatio evangelica IX:21:1-19).
- **Artapanus** of Alexandria (c. 200 BCE), a Hellenistic Jewish historian: *Moses was the master of Orpheus. As an adult, he transmitted to people much useful knowledge (...) he confided the sacred letters to the priests, and there were also cats, dogs, ibis (...) This is why Moses was loved by crowds, and the priests, who considered him worthy of divine honors, called him Hermes, since he interpreted the sacred letters* (Preparatio evangelica IX:27).
- **Eupolemus**²⁵⁵ (c. 160 BCE), a Hellenistic Jewish historian: *Moses was the first to acquire wisdom and transmit writing to the Jews, the Phoenicians received it, then from the Phoenicians to the Greeks. Moses was the first to write laws for the Jews* (Preparatio evangelica IX:26).
- **Diodorus of Sicily** (c. 50 BCE), a Greek historian: *Cadmus, who was a citizen of Egyptian Thebes, begat several children, of whom one was Semelê (...) And since he had become conversant with the teachings of the Egyptians about the gods, he transferred the birth of the ancient Osiris to more recent times, and, out of regard for the descendants of Cadmus, instituted a new initiation (...) In general, they say, the Greeks appropriate to themselves the most renowned of both Egyptian heroes and gods, and so also the colonies sent out by them (...) Now the Egyptians say that also after these events a great number of colonies were spread from Egypt over all the inhabited world. To Babylon, for instance, colonists were led by Belus [Baal], who was held to be the son of Poseidon and Libya; and after establishing himself on the Euphrates (...) They say also that those who set forth with Danaus, likewise from Egypt, settled what is practically the oldest city in Greece, Argos, and that the nation of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria, were founded as colonies by certain emigrants from their country (...) among the Jews Moses referred his laws to the god who is invoked as Iao* (Historical Library I:23, 28, 94). *Many generations later men supposed that Cadmus, the son of Agenor, had been the first to bring the letters from Phoenicia to Greece; and after the time of Cadmus onwards the Greeks were believed to have kept making new discoveries in the science of writing, since a sort of general ignorance of the facts possessed the Greeks (...) About this time Danaüs together with his daughters fled from Egypt (...) And a little after this time Cadmus, the son of Agenor, having been dispatched by the king to seek out Europe, put ashore at Rhodes (...) Now Cadmus honoured likewise the Lindian Athena with votive offerings, one of which was a striking bronze cauldron worked after the ancient manner, and this carried an inscription in Phoenician letters, which, men say, were first brought from Phoenicia to Greece (...) To the Muses, we are further told, it was given by their father Zeus to discover the letters and to combine words in the way which is designated poetry. And in reply to those who say that the Syrians are the discoverers of the letters, the Phoenicians having learned them from the Syrians and then passed them on to the Greeks, and that these Phoenicians are those who sailed to Europe together with Cadmus and this is the reason why the Greeks call the letters "Phoenician," men tell us, on the other hand, that the Phoenicians were not the first to make this discovery, but that they did no more than to change the forms of the letters, whereupon the majority of mankind made use of the way of writing them as the Phoenicians devised it, and so the*

²⁵³ F. JACOBY - Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker
Leiden 1962 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 993,994.

²⁵⁴ A.J. FREND - Two Long-Lost Phoenician Inscriptions and the Emergence of Ancient Israel
in: *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 134,1 (2002) pp. 37-43.

²⁵⁵ B.Z. WACHOLDER - Eupolemus. A Study of Judeo-Greek Literature
Cincinnati 1974 Ed. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion pp. 71-96.

letters received the designation we have mentioned above (Historical Library V:57-58,74) The ancestors of the Jews had been driven out of all Egypt as men who were impious and detested by the gods. For by way of purging the country all persons who had white or leprous marks on their bodies had been assembled and driven across the border, as being under a curse; the refugees had occupied the territory round about Jerusalem, and having organized the nation of the Jews had made their hatred of mankind into a tradition, and on this account had introduced utterly outlandish laws: not to break bread with any other race, nor to show them any good will at all (...) Antiochus, called Epiphanes, on defeating the Jews had entered the innermost sanctuary of the god's temple, where it was lawful for the priest alone to enter. Finding there a marble statue of a heavily bearded man seated on an ass, with a book in his hands, he supposed it to be an image of Moses, the founder of Jerusalem and organizer of the nation, the man, moreover, who had ordained for the Jews their misanthropic and lawless customs (Historical Library XXXIV:1). Now that we are about to record the war against the Jews, we consider it appropriate to give first a summary account of the establishment of the nation, from its origins, and of the practices observed among them. When in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt, the common people ascribed their troubles to the workings of a divine agency; for indeed with many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practising different rites of religion and sacrifice, their own traditional observances in honour of the gods had fallen into disuse. Hence the natives of the land surmised that unless they removed the foreigners, their troubles would never be resolved. At once, therefore, the aliens were driven from the country, and the most outstanding and active among them banded together and, as some say, were cast ashore in Greece and certain other regions ; their leaders were notable men, chief among them being Danaïis and Cadmus. But the greater number were driven into what is now called Judaea, which is not far distant from Egypt and was at that time utterly uninhabited. The colony was headed by a man called Moses, outstanding both for his wisdom and for his courage. On taking possession of the land he founded, besides other cities, one that is now the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual, drew up their laws and ordered their political institutions. He also divided them into twelve tribes, since this is regarded as the most perfect number and corresponds to the number of months that make up a year. But he had no images whatsoever of the gods made for them, being of the opinion that God is not in human form; rather the Heaven that surrounds the earth is alone divine, and rules the universe. The sacrifices that he established differ from those of other nations, as does their way of living, for as a result of their own expulsion from Egypt he introduced an unsocial and intolerant mode of life. He picked out the men of most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire nation, and appointed them priests; and he ordained that they should occupy themselves with the temple and the honours and sacrifices offered to their god. These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Jews never have a king, and authority over the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. They call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts as a messenger to them of God's commandments. It is he, we are told, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them. And at the end of their laws there is even appended the statement: "These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares unto the Jews." Their lawgiver was careful also to make provision for warfare, and required the young men to cultivate manliness, steadfastness, and, generally, the endurance of every hardship. He led out military expeditions against the neighbouring tribes, and after annexing much land apportioned it out, assigning equal allotments to private citizens and greater ones to the priests, in order that they, by virtue of receiving more ample revenues, might be undistracted and apply themselves continually to the worship of God (Historical Library XL:3).

- **Strabo** (c. 20 CE), a Greek geographer, philosopher and historian: An Egyptian priest named Moses, who possessed a portion of the country called the Lower [Egypt], being dissatisfied with

the established institutions there, left it and came to Judea with a large body of people who worshipped the Divinity. He declared and taught that the Egyptians and Africans entertained erroneous sentiments, in representing the Divinity under the likeness of wild beasts and cattle of the field; that the Greeks also were in error in making images of their gods after the human form. For God [said he] may be this one thing which encompasses us all, land and sea, which we call heaven, or the universe, or the nature of things. Who then of any understanding would venture to form an image of this Deity, resembling anything with which we are conversant? on the contrary, we ought not to carve any images, but to set apart some sacred ground and a shrine worthy of the Deity, and to worship Him without any similitude. He taught that those who made fortunate dreams were to be permitted to sleep in the temple, where they might dream both for themselves and others; that those who practised temperance and justice, and none else, might expect good, or some gift or sign from the God, from time to time. By such doctrine Moses persuaded a large body of right-minded persons to accompany him to the place where Jerusalem now stands. He easily obtained possession of it, as the spot was not such as to excite jealousy, nor for which there could be any fierce contention; for it is rocky, and, although well supplied with water, it is surrounded by a barren and waterless territory. The space within [the city] is 60 stadia [in circumference], with rock underneath the surface. Instead of arms, he taught that their defence was in their sacred things and the Divinity, for whom he was desirous of finding a settled place, promising to the people to deliver such a kind of worship and religion as should not burthen those who adopted it with great expense, nor molest them with [so-called] divine possessions, nor other absurd practices. Moses thus obtained their good opinion, and established no ordinary kind of government. All the nations around willingly united themselves to him, allured by his discourses and promises (Geography XVI:2:35-36).

- **Pliny the Elder** (c. 70 CE), a Roman naturalist: *I have always been of opinion, that letters were of Assyrian origin, but other writers, Gellius, for instance, suppose that they were invented in Egypt by Mercury: others, again, will have it that they were discovered by the Syrians; and that Cadmus brought from Phoenicia 16 letters into Greece. To these, Palamedes, it is said, at the time of the Trojan war, added these 4: H Y Φ X. Simonides, the lyric poet, afterwards added a like number Ψ Ξ Ω Θ; the sounds denoted by all of which are now received into our alphabet (Natural History VII:57).*
- **Tacitus** (c. 100 CE), a senator and a historian of the Roman Empire: *The Egyptians, in their animal-pictures, were the first people to represent thought by symbols: these, the earliest documents of human history, are visible to-day, impressed upon stone. They describe themselves also as the inventors of the alphabet: from Egypt, they consider, the Phoenicians, who were predominant at sea, imported the knowledge into Greece, and gained the credit of discovering what they had borrowed. For the tradition runs that it was Cadmus, arriving with a Phoenician fleet, who taught the art to the still uncivilized Greek peoples. Others relate that Cecrops of Athens (or Linus of Thebes) and, in the Trojan era, Palamedes of Argos, invented sixteen letters, the rest being added later by different authors, particularly Simonides. In Italy the Etruscans learned the lesson from the Corinthian Demaratus, the Aborigines from Evander the Arcadian; and in form the Latin characters are identical with those of the earliest Greeks. But, in our case too, the original number was small, and additions were made subsequently: a precedent for Claudius, who appended three more letters, which had their vogue during his reign, then fell into desuetude, but still meet the eye on the official bronzes fixed in the forums and temples (Annals XI:14). Some say that the Jews were fugitives from the island of Crete, who settled on the nearest coast of Africa about the time when Saturn was driven from his throne by the power of Jupiter (...) Others assert that in the reign of Isis the overflowing population of Egypt, led by Hierosolymus and Judas, discharged itself into the neighbouring countries. Many, again, say that they were a race of Ethiopian origin, who in the time of king Cepheus were driven by fear and hatred of their neighbours to seek a new dwelling-place. Others describe them as an Assyrian horde who, not having sufficient territory, took possession of part of Egypt, and founded cities of their own in what is called the Hebrew country, lying on the borders of Syria. Others, again, assign a very distinguished origin to the Jews, alleging that they were the Sohyi, a nation celebrated in the poems of Homer, who called the city which they founded Hierosolyma after their own name. Most writers, however, agree in stating that once a disease, which*

horribly disfigured the body, broke out over Egypt; that king Bocchoris, seeking a remedy, consulted the oracle of Hammon, and was bidden to cleanse his realm, and to convey into some foreign land this race detested by the gods. The people, who had been collected after diligent search, finding themselves left in a desert, sat for the most part in a stupor of grief, till one of the exiles, Moses by name, warned them not to look for any relief from God or man, forsaken as they were of both, but to trust to themselves, taking for their heaven-sent leader that man who should first help them to be quit of their present misery. They agreed, and in utter ignorance began to advance at random. Nothing, however, distressed them so much as the scarcity of water, and they had sunk ready to perish in all directions over the plain, when a herd of donkeys was seen to retire from their pasture to a rock shaded by trees. Moses followed them, and, guided by the appearance of a grassy spot, discovered an abundant spring of water. This furnished relief. After a continuous journey for six days, on the seventh they possessed themselves of a country, from which they expelled the inhabitants, and in which they founded a city and a temple. Moses, wishing to secure for the future his authority over the nation, gave them a novel form of worship, opposed to all that is practised by other men. Things sacred with us, with them have no sanctity, while they allow what with us is forbidden. In their holy place they have consecrated an image of the animal by whose guidance they found deliverance from their long and thirsty wanderings. They slay the ram, seemingly in derision of Hammon, and they sacrifice the ox, because the Egyptians worship it as Apis. They abstain from swine's flesh, in consideration of what they suffered when they were infected by the leprosy to which this animal is liable. By their frequent fasts they still bear witness to the long hunger of former days, and the Jewish bread, made without leaven, is retained as a memorial of their hurried seizure of corn. We are told that the rest of the 7th day was adopted, because this day brought with it a termination of their toils; after a while the charm of indolence beguiled them into giving up the 7th year also to inaction (...) This worship, however introduced, is upheld by its antiquity; all their other customs, which are at once perverse and disgusting, owe their strength to their very badness. The most degraded out of other races, scorning their national beliefs, brought to them their contributions and presents. This augmented the wealth of the Jews, as also did the fact, that among themselves they are inflexibly honest and ever ready to show compassion, though they regard the rest of mankind with all the hatred of enemies. They sit apart at meals, they sleep apart, and though, as a nation, they are singularly prone to lust, they abstain from intercourse with foreign women; among themselves nothing is unlawful. Circumcision was adopted by them as a mark of difference from other men. Those who come over to their religion adopt the practice, and have this lesson first instilled into them, to despise all gods, to disown their country, and set at nought parents, children, and brethren. Still they provide for the increase of their numbers. It is a crime among them to kill any newly-born infant. They hold that the souls of all who perish in battle or by the hands of the executioner are immortal. Hence a passion for propagating their race and a contempt for death. They are wont to bury rather than to burn their dead, following in this the Egyptian custom; they bestow the same care on the dead, and they hold the same belief about the lower world. Quite different is their faith about things divine. The Egyptians worship many animals and images of monstrous form; the Jews have purely mental conceptions of Deity, as one in essence. They call those profane who make representations of God in human shape out of perishable materials. They believe that Being to be supreme and eternal, neither capable of representation, nor of decay. They therefore do not allow any images to stand in their cities, much less in their temples. This flattery is not paid to their kings, nor this honour to our Emperors. From the fact, however, that their priests used to chant to the music of flutes and cymbals, and to wear garlands of ivy, and that a golden vine was found in the temple, some have thought that they worshipped father Liber, the conqueror of the East, though their institutions do not by any means harmonize with the theory; for Liber established a festive and cheerful worship, while the Jewish religion is tasteless and mean (History V:2-5).

- **Tatian** (160-170 CE) an Assyrian early Christian writer and theologian: *But now it seems proper for me to demonstrate that our philosophy is older than the systems of the Greeks. Moses and Homer shall be our limits, each of them being of great antiquity; the one being the oldest of poets and historians, and the other the founder of all barbarian wisdom. Let us, then, institute a comparison*

between them; and we shall find that our doctrines are older, not only than those of the Greeks, but than the invention of letters (...) the Egyptians also there are accurate chronicles. Ptolemy, not the king, but a priest of Mendes, is the interpreter of their affairs. This writer, narrating the acts of the kings, says that the departure of the Jews from Egypt to the places whither they went occurred in the time of king Amosis [1530-1505], under the leadership of Moses. He thus speaks: "Amosis lived in the time of king Inachus." After him, Apion the grammarian, a man most highly esteemed, in the 4th book of his Aegyptiaca (there are five books of his), besides many other things, says that Amosis destroyed Avaris in the time of the Argive Inachus, as the Mendesian Ptolemy wrote in his annals. But the time from Inachus to the taking of Troy occupies 20 generations (...) every intelligent person will most carefully observe that, according to the tradition of the Greeks, they possessed no historical composition; for Cadmus, who taught them letters, came into Boeotia many generations later. But after Inachus, under Phoroneus, a check was with difficulty given to their savage and nomadic life, and they entered upon a new order of things. Wherefore, if Moses is shown to be contemporary with Inachus, he is 400 years older than the Trojan war [1184 BCE] (To the Greeks XXXI, XXXVIII, XXXIX).

- **Eusebius** (c. 300 CE), a Roman historian, exegete and Christian polemicist: *Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, first brought over with him the mysteries of the Egyptians, and imparted them to the Greeks; just, in fact, as Cadmus brought to them the Phoenician mysteries together with the knowledge of letters: for the Greeks up to that time did not yet know the use of the alphabet (...) From Misor was born Taautus, who invented the first written alphabet; the Egyptians called him Thouth, the Alexandrians Thoth, and the Greeks Hermes (...) Tardily and painfully they learned the nature of letters. Those at least who assign the greatest antiquity to their use of them boast of having learned it from the Phoenicians and Cadmus. Nevertheless no one could show any record that is preserved even from that time either in temples or on public monuments: seeing that there has been great doubt and inquiry, whether even those who so many years later went on the expedition to Troy, made use of writing; and the true opinion is rather that they were ignorant of the use now made of written letters (The Preparation of the Gospel I:6:4, I:10:14, X:7:5-8). In the year 508 of Abraham [born in 2106 BCE]: Egypt left (1508 BCE) under Moses leading (...) in the year 543 (1473 CE): Danaus calls Argos after being expelled from Egypt (...) In the year 563 of Abraham (1453 BCE) Cadmus, who left Egyptian Thebes for Syria, reigns in Tyre and Sidon (Chronicle of Eusebius/Jerome)*

For a long time, archaeologists have considered these testimonies had little or no value. However, some recent archaeological discoveries have confirmed two key points: the oldest alphabet appeared in Egypt during the Hyksos dynasties, around 1600 BCE, and then spread in Palestine from 1500 BCE. Old Canaanite²⁵⁶ could be written thanks to cuneiform²⁵⁷, at least from Zimri-Lim (1680-1667), but sounds' equivalence being imperfect and cursive writing being difficult on clay tablets, a new writing appeared at Serabit el-Khadim during the 15th Dynasty²⁵⁸. Several inscriptions in proto-Canaanite have been discovered in Egypt (Serabit el-Khadim in Sinai and Wadi el-Hôl²⁵⁹ north of Thebes) and in Palestine (Lachish, Gezer and Shechem). These inscriptions are difficult to date (c. 1600-1500 BCE) likely during the reign of Apopi (1613-1573) the last great Hyksos king. The scribal palette of Atju reads: *Palette made by the king [Apopi], the scribe of Re, whom Thoth [god of writing and wisdom] himself taught, who expectore the Ombian Seth and its followers to/ of all things; multitasking on the day when he reads faithfully all the difficult (passages) of the writings as (smoothly as [?]) flows the Nile [...] with a great [..., unique(?) ...], stout-hearted on the day of battle, with a greater reputation than any (other) king, protector of strange lands who have never (even) had a glimpse of him;*

²⁵⁶ A.F. RAINEY – Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets Vol. 2

Leiden 1996 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 2-3, 15, 31-32.

²⁵⁷ W. HOROWITZ, T. OSHIMA, S. SANDERS – Cuneiform in Canaan. Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times Jerusalem 2006 Ed. Israel Exploration Society. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem pp. 12-15, 130-143, 218.

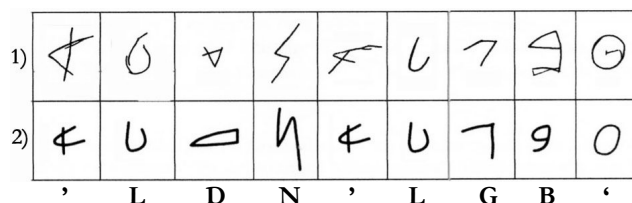
²⁵⁸ A. LEMAIRE – Les «Hyksos» et les débuts de l'écriture alphabétique au Proche-Orient

in: Des signes pictographiques à l'alphabet (Karthala, 2000) pp.103-133.

²⁵⁹ J. COLEMAN DARNELL, F.W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, M.J. LUNDBERG, P. KYLE MCCARTER, B. ZUCKERMAN – Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions from the Wadi el-Hôl in: *The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 59 (2005), pp. 73-110.

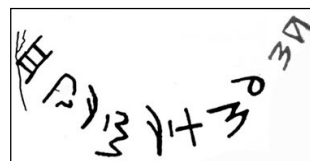
living image of Re upon earth, solving(?) [...] people. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi, given life every day like Re forever. I was [...] to(?) his teaching, he is a judge(?) of the needy(?) commons — there is no false statement in that — there is indeed not his like in any land! [...] Son of Re, of his body, whom he loves, [Apopi], given life. // Palette given by the king to the scribe Atju²⁶⁰. Thus King Apopi (birth name of Moses) was a scribe whom Thoth [god of writing and wisdom] himself taught, he was also able to read faithfully all the difficult (passages) of the writings. These information agree with those of the Bible showing Moses, when he ruled the north of Egypt (1613-1573), as the first editor in paleo-Hebrew text (Exodus 24:4) transmitted to priests (Numbers 5:23) who had to read to the Israelites (Deuteronomy 6:6,9).

The oldest epigraph in paleo-Hebrew is dated 1550-1480 BCE²⁶¹. One has to notice that it comes from a professional scribe who inscribed his name in cuneiform: Ali-dîn-ili of Kup[patu?] (*a-lî-di-in-i-lî ša ku-up-[pa-tu? "high building"]*) and engraved it in paleo-Hebrew as: 'LDN'L GB' (Alidinel of Gaba "hill?") on the edge of the tablet. This paleo-Hebrew script (1st line) is very close to that yet much later (c. 950 BCE) found at Tel Zayit²⁶² (2nd line).



From its discovery (in 2005) the Tel Zayit Abecedary served as evidence supporting the notion of widespread literacy in ancient Israel during the 10th century²⁶³ because of two reasons: the increasing number of paleo-Hebrew inscriptions discovered in the period dated 1100-1000 BCE (at least 6) and the regularity of writing of these inscriptions that is possible only if there were schools of scribes²⁶⁴. In fact, as clay tablets were used for writing Babylonian (cuneiform) and scrolls were used for Old Canaanite (alphabet) or Egyptian (hieroglyph), it remains absolutely nothing of these rolls which were perishable (except in Egypt because of its climate). Scribes were called in Akkadian *tupšarru*, from the Sumerian word DUB-SAR "tablet-write" and *sepîru*, translating the Sumerian KUŠ-SAR "skin-write"²⁶⁵.

Very few inscriptions in paleo-Hebrew have been found in Palestine, at the present time the oldest inscriptions, discovered at Lachish, are dated 1400-1300 by ceramics²⁶⁶. On a bowl there are the following words (opposite figure reverse): *bšlšt / ym / yrh* "in the 3rd day of the month [of ?]" and a ewer of the same time reads²⁶⁷: *mtn: šy* [rb]ty 'lt "Mattan: offering [to?] my sover[eign] Elat".



²⁶⁰ H. GOEDICKE – The Scribal Palette of Athu (Berlin Inv. Nr. 7798)

in: *Chronique d'Égypte* LXIII (1988) Fasc. 125 pp. 42-56.

W. HELCK – Historisch-Bibliographische Texte der 2. Zwischenzeit und Neue Texte der 18. Dynastie Wiesbaden 1975 Ed. Otto Harrassowitz pp.54-58.

²⁶¹ S. DALLEY – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection

in: *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology* Vol. 9 (CDL Press, 2009) pp. 1-16, 112, plates LIII, CLIV.

²⁶² L. COLONNA D'ISTRIA – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection

in: *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* N°3 (2012) pp. 61-63.

²⁶³ C.A. ROLLSTON – The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary and Putative Evidence for Israelite Literacy

in: *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context* (Eisenbrauns, 2008), pp. 61-96.

²⁶⁴ D.M. CARR – The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction

2011 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 360-385.

²⁶⁵ F. JOANNÈS - Dictionnaire de la civilisation mésopotamienne

Paris 2001 Éd. Robert Laffont pp. 763-766.

²⁶⁶ E. PUECH – Origine de l'alphabet

in: *Revue Biblique* 93:2, 1986, pp. 177-178.

²⁶⁷ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE

New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 274-276.



Ewer: *mtn: šy [rb]ty 'lt* (reverse) 1400-1300 BCE

Since the Israelites entered into Canaan around 1500 BCE, why most archaeologists and Egyptologists persist to teach that this pivotal event in the Egyptian (and Israelite) history occurred around 1200 BCE?

WHY THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN IS DATED C. -1200 RATHER THAN C. -1500?

After reading my work above, an honest reader may wonder why archaeologists and Egyptologists continue to teach that the conquest of Canaan took place around 1200 BCE instead of 1500 BCE? In fact, I asked this question to all the specialists who had written an article about that matter (about a hundred) after sending them a copy of my work (only half gave me an answer). The responses are staggering (for a scientific mind):

- CHRISTIANE DESROCHES-NOBLECOURT (French Institute of Oriental Archaeology) answered me that she was not a specialist in this matter (sic) and therefore could not say for sure, but she told me that the biblical text could not be used by historians and for archeology I would have to refer to Finkelstein's books.
- CHRISTIANE ZIEGLER (General curator, honorary director of the Department of Egyptian Antiquities at the Louvre and publishing director of the archaeological mission of the Louvre) wrote she was not a specialist in this matter (sic) which was very controversial. She advised me to wait for further archaeological discoveries.
- PASCAL VERNUS (Director of Studies in Egyptian linguistics and philology at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes at the Sorbonne, resident at the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology) wrote me that after reading the first page of my work he found that his name was missing from my bibliography which was an obvious lack of seriousness and forced him to stop.
- JEAN LECLANT (former professor of Egyptology at the Collège de France) just advised me to stick to the conventional presentation (?).
- NICOLAS GRIMAL (Professor of Egyptology at the Sorbonne Paris IV, former director of the French Institute of Oriental Archaeology. Chair of Egyptology at the Collège de France) said to me that the matter was controverted and there was a lot of nonsense written about it.
- PIERRE BRIANT (holder of the Chair History and Civilization of the Achaemenid World and Empire of Alexander at Collège de France) told me he does not read my work because it was necessarily wrong since it contradicted the official chronology (sic).

- MAURICE SARTRE (Professor of ancient history at the University of Tours 1, former scientist resident at the French Institute of Archaeology of the Near East) explained that I was very pretentious to examine a subject I knew bad, further I did not even have the basics. He counseled me that I should start by reading his books. I wrote him that I had read them and it is for this reason that I sent him my work to report the problem. He then told me that I was an insolent and arrogant because I dared to contradict him.
- LAURE PANTALACCI (former Director of French Institute of Oriental Archaeology) told me a year later through the Secretary of the IFAO that because I was defending the date of 607 BCE for the fall of Jerusalem my work was not credible (sic).
- JEAN-CLAUDE GOYON (Master of Research at CNRS and professor emeritus of Egyptology at the University of Lyon II) said to me that since I used the biblical text as a historical document that way of working was absurd because this book contained a collection of coarse legends.
- DAVID ALAN WARBURTON (former director of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies), jury member of my first PhD defense, told me I was an idiot for having contradicted Rolf Krauss about the Egyptian lunar calendar.
- LEO DEPUYDT (Professor, Department of Egyptology and Ancient Western Asian Studies at the Brown University) wrote that my work could not be true because I was putting all was known upside down and if it was true it would be a complete revolution in Egyptology (sic).

Some Egyptologists have agreed to read more than the first pages of my work, but the answers which I got were not really better. CLAUDE VANDERSLEYEN (professor at the Catholic University of Louvain, where he teaches Egyptian art and Egyptian language): *I'm taking a big risk by telling you what I think, that could irritate you or chagrin you, and you felt against me the same feelings of frustration and even resentment, as towards other colleagues. The fact that everyone have asked you to limit your search to a particular period and not wanting to deal with all the periods is a sign that you do not seem to have, understood. I printed the first ten pages of your study about the Egyptian chronology (there are 103!) to get an idea first. About the Israelite chronology the fact there are five times more is a sign that you're not on the right track. One does not take you for a ride, but one does not dare to say that you are quite beside the right path. I could bring old proverbs like: "one shouldn't spread oneself too thinly", "The one who don't know to confine itself will never know writing", or "μεγα βιβλιον, μεγα κακον". The first ten pages I've read make it unnecessary to go further. You have worked from authors and not according to the sources, not even from their sources. Why the Babylonian chronology is reliable nearly one year? What worth is the Babylonian chronology you give p. 2? On what is it based? One immediately enters into the blur and unproven, if not in the unprovable. Without going any further, you understand that those who told you to limit yourself to a single period are right. But it is above your "method" which is devoid of any credibility. In fact, you have no method. So, either you learn to work correctly (How do you not understand yourself spontaneously?) or you stop to fill paper. What I tell you is hard, but it is the only useful judgment. Please accept, dear sir, with my sincere sympathy (private letter in French dated June 5, 2008).* If the reader can not believe the responses above, he can write himself to these Egyptologists in order to check (good luck) that most of these specialists are absolutely sure of their doubts about dating the birth of Israel!

To end on a positive note, I all the same received a favorable letter (only 1 out 100!) in which PAUL BARGUET (curator in the Department of Egyptian Antiquities at the Louvre and professor of Egyptian epigraphy at the Ecole du Louvre. Director of the Institute of Egyptology at the University of Lyon II) sent me his own brief research about chronology in order to confirm that the biblical exodus could have occurred only around 1500 BCE.